THE
MIDDLEBOROUGH
ANTIQUARIAN

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The Middleborough Antiquarian

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— THE OLD MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION —

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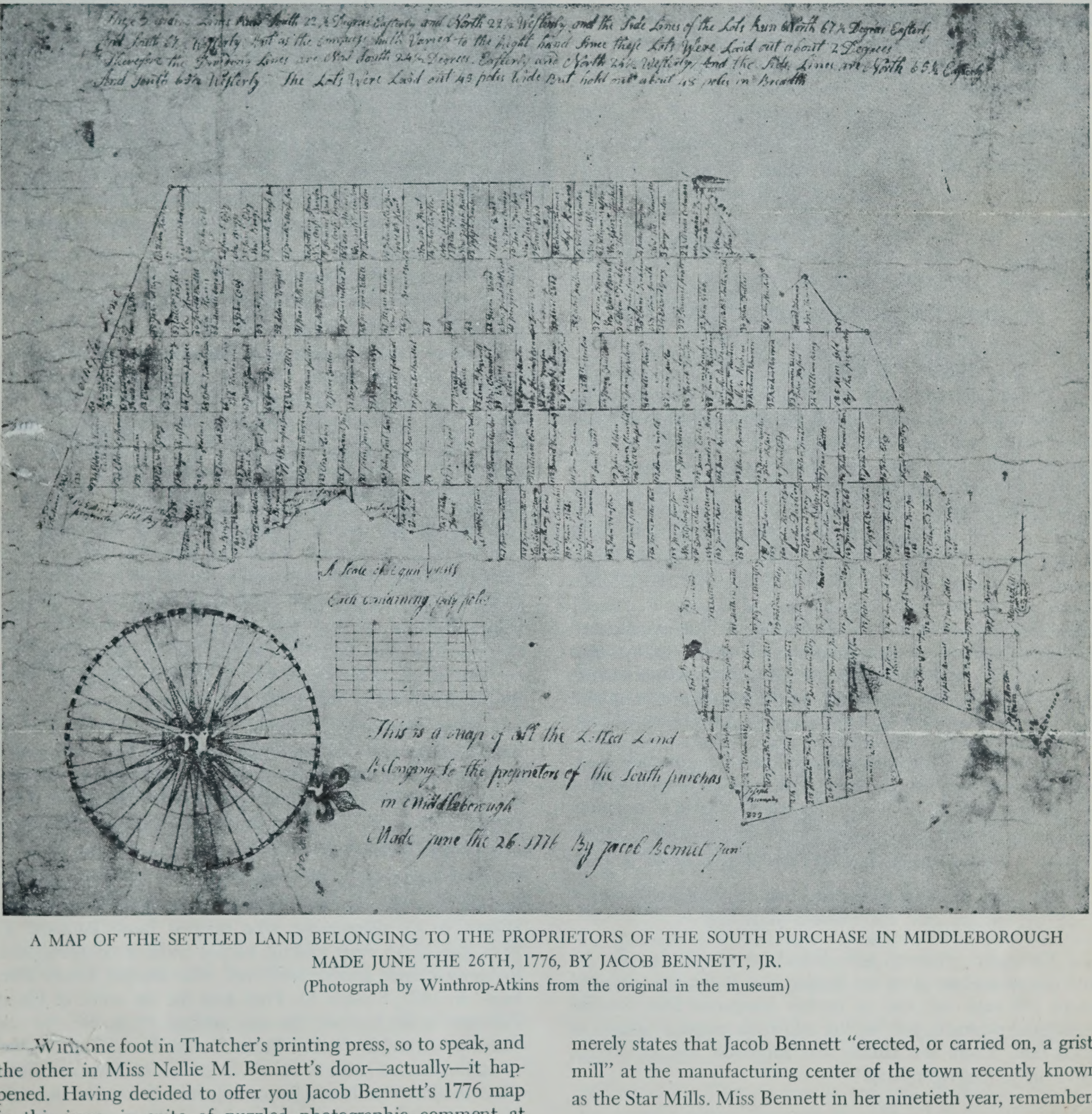

This is a map of all the Settled Land
belonging to the proprietors of the South purchas
in Middleborough
Made june the 26 1776 By Jacob Bennet Jun^r

A MAP OF THE SETTLED LAND BELONGING TO THE PROPRIETORS OF THE SOUTH PURCHASE IN MIDDLEBOROUGH MADE JUNE THE 26TH, 1776, BY JACOB BENNETT, JR.
(Photograph by Winthrop-Atkins from the original in the museum)

With one foot in Thatcher's printing press, so to speak, and the other in Miss Nellie M. Bennett's door—actually—it happened. Having decided to offer you Jacob Bennett's 1776 map in this issue, in spite of puzzled photographic comment at Winthrop-Atkins, and downright caustic criticism by photo-engraver and printer, I found we knew little or nothing about our cartographer. Weston's History of the Town of Middleboro merely states that Jacob Bennett "erected, or carried on, a gristmill" at the manufacturing center of the town recently known as the Star Mills. Miss Bennett in her ninetieth year, remembers more about Middleboro history than most of us ever knew, and yet she had never heard that her grandfather ever had anything to do with a gristmill! Something had to be done.

If this were a newspaper story the caption might well be MISS BENNETT TO THE RESCUE. The sheep-bound manuscript ledger she has just presented to the association begins in 1726. It is a combination diary, account book and whaling log tracing Bennett activities to the outbreak of the Revolution. At this last minute I've got to get my foot out of danger, and there is no time to tell of the "tuns" of "ironware" Repentance Bennett received from Judge Oliver's furnaces—the iron, rods, slabs, skillits, spiders, kittles, and great kittles—nor the whale bone bought, traded and sold in Middleborough in 1750—but in a subsequent issue, after hours of study, I think we will have a real bit of American history that will not be available anywhere else.

For the moment then, back to Jacob Bennett, Jr. Instead of a man who may or may not have built a gristmill (Weston reference), we have a cartographer, farmer, ironmonger, glorified assessor (interpretation by Fletcher Clark), town surveyor and in all probability (though I haven't come to any such entry as yet), selectman. You will hear more of Jacob Bennett—and now for the deadline.

REMINISCENCES WHILE PERUSING THE NEW TOWN MAP IN 1889

Middleboro, Mass., June 17, 1775

"On this day two Aunts of Albert Pickens were sitting on the doorstep near the old Morton house when the thunder or roll of cannon sounding from Bunker Hill reverberated over the hills of Muttock to their ears. The doorstep remains at Mr. Pickens' residence but the aunts sleep the sleep of the just. How different the view today from that 114 years ago. What a stretch of woods and fields as far as the eye could see. One could see the Spooner residence, another dwelling at the Old Briggs house, and one at the Old Morton House, and the Dorrace house, and at W. B. Woods' house, and Charles F. Pierce's house and the old Cushman house, near J. M. Pickens' residence and from there only a cow-path all the way to the Thomas Barrows' house on Main Street and to the Cole house near James Weston's and the Thomas house on the corner of Centre and Oak Streets. All the rest was huckleberry fields and cow pastures.

At Muttock a Ritchie family, peddlers from far-away Scotland had built two houses, one opposite the cemetery and that one known as the Abiel Washburn place. The Ritchie family were known as early as 1737, even before the noted Judge Oliver put in his appearance; and had his iron works at Muttock.

Does your mind grasp the situation as it appeared on that June day, one hundred and fourteen years ago?

They were not vexed with district taxes, water tax, fire tax and even town taxes were not burdensome as the town was but about 100 years old, and no electric companies then invaded their quiet precincts, and herring sold at six pence a cartload of 8000 fish! There was fatness and happiness for you. Well, leave the picture right there."

From scrapbook of the late
Mrs. Emily Horton of Attleboro, Mass.
Loaned by Miss Shirlie C. Clark.

Susan B. Brackett

FIVE GENERATIONS OF PRATT'S and WHERE THEY LIVED

by

Rose E. S. Pratt

It may be that the Pratt Farm on East Main Street is the only one in town that has been owned and operated by the same family for almost two hundred years.

Ebenezer Pratt, a tanner by trade, and his wife Bulah, came from Bridgewater. In 1777, he paid one thousand pounds to Nehemiah Allen for the new "salt box" house he had recently built. It is mentioned in Weston's History of Middleboro. The deed reads in part, "bounded by the Old Indian Path (so called) and easterly . . . till you come to a Walnut Stump . . . to the Plymouth Road . . . and thence . . . with all Houses, Barns, Orchards, Meadows, etc. thereon." There were ninety-eight acres, "more or less," including two brooks fed by springs. When Ebenezer passed away, his eight children heired the property.

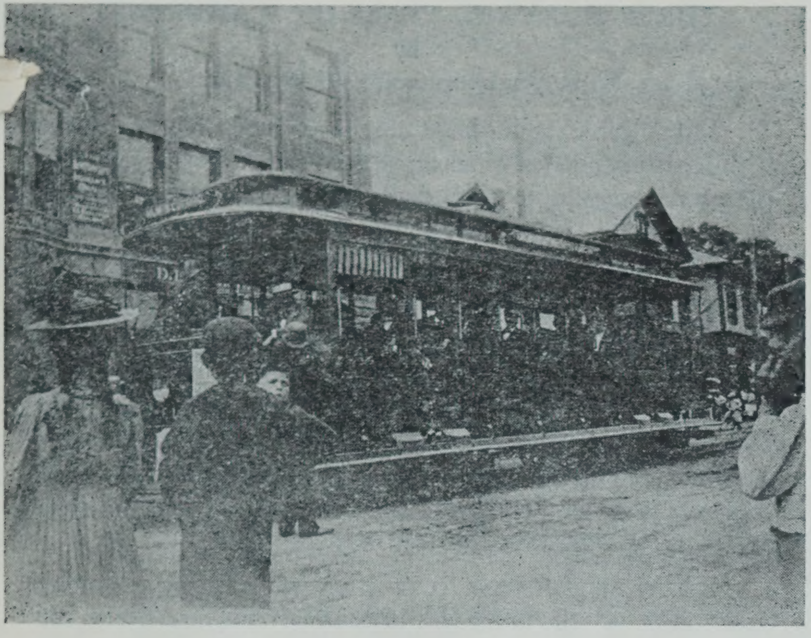
The youngest son, Thomas, bought all the shares, and became owner of the homestead. In 1798, he married Lydia Macomber, and records tell us that he "died of extreme old age" at 89 years, leaving eight children.

Thomas' oldest son, Simeon Macomber Pratt, bought the property from his father. He was considered a prosperous farmer in his day, and the old home was remodeled in 1869. The back was raised to two stories, changing the "salt box" architecture. The large chimney was taken down and replaced by a smaller one, including six fire-places and a brick oven. The front room still has the original wood panelling under the plaster.

Simeon's son, Luther Bradford Pratt, was the next owner. A few changes were made inside the house in 1888. Outside, the ell covering the well, and used as a wood-shed, was removed. A jet was added to the main roof of the house, as a trimming. General farming was continued. A cranberry bog was built. The old barn burned in 1898 and the present barn was built in 1905. At that time it was full of horses, which were used in contracting, sand and gravel business.

Ernest Sumner Pratt became the owner, after the death of his parents in 1930. Another ninety-six acres have been added to the farm. For more than forty years the principal crop was ice. A purebred Guernsey herd was started in 1932 and at the present time, more than sixty head of Guernsey and Holstein cattle graze the pastures.

It is interesting to note that Thomas Pratt, in April 1812, sold the lot of his land on the corner of Sachem and East Main Streets, to his sister-in-law, who married Jacob Barrows. In 1839, Simeon M. Pratt sold the lot just north of the homestead, to his own sister, Louisa Jane Pratt, who married Henry Dunham. In 1857, Simeon M. Pratt sold the lot north of Henry Dunham to his brother, Thomas Addison Pratt. Simeon and Thomas married Irene and Ruth, Bradford sisters. Jacob Barrows, Jr., married Lydia Bradford, half sister of Irene and Ruth. Thus the first four houses beyond Sachem Street, on the right of East Main Street, were occupied by brothers and sisters. At least two generations of each family continued to live in these houses. Time has brought different owners to all, except the first Pratt Homestead on the hill.



Car No. 81, the first trolley in Middleboro, came from Bridgewater loaded with officials, heading for Lakeville and New Bedford on Thursday, June 15, 1899.

THE BIRTH AND BURIAL OF MIDDLEBORO'S TROLLEY CARS

by

John Rockwell

In the early 1900's, Middleboro was a center of street railway activity. Direct transportation was available to Brockton, Taunton, New Bedford and the Cape. Connections could be made in these cities for any further point. Three lines served Middleboro. The New Bedford, Middleboro and Brockton Street Railway was the first to enter Middleboro and was built in 1898 and 1899. It was consolidated with other smaller lines around Brockton to become part of the Brockton Street Railway, which in turn, became part of the Old Colony Street Railway in 1901. Stockholders of the Old Colony and the Boston and Northern Street Railway voted to consolidate on June 2, 1911 to become the Bay State Street Railway and on January 15, 1919 became part of the Eastern Mass. Street Railway. This division was often called the Lake Shore Route because of its proximity to Lake Assawamset. The line stopped operation after Labor Day, 1919 with Alden Sisson and Charles Lawrence operating the last car from New Bedford to Brockton on September 5.

The East Taunton Street Railway was incorporated on June 4, 1898 and built their line to Middleboro in 1899. Until the end of the Brockton and New Bedford line these cars ran only to Everett Square, but after the abandonment of the Eastern Mass. Street Railway, the Taunton cars were permitted to go down Center Street as far as Tripp's Waiting Room. The last trolley on this line was operated by John Cordeiro on May 12, 1929.

The Middleboro, Wareham and Buzzards Bay Street Railway was built and began operation in 1901. A car barn was constructed on Wareham Street. This building is now being used to manufacture Maxim Fire Apparatus. The Taunton and Buzzards Bay Street Railway bought out this line at a receiver's sale on December 7, 1904 only to be absorbed by the New Bedford and Onset Street Railway in June, 1906. This line ceased operation in 1923.

Regularly assigned express cars were used on the Brockton-New Bedford and Cape lines. The building now being used by the Bear Wheel and Brake Service on Everett Street, just a short distance from the square, was used as a freight transfer. Later, a siding was constructed on Center Avenue and a building erected for trolley freight and express, located between Station Street and Center Avenue. This building is now occupied by the C. P. Washburn Company.

During the winter months, closed cars were run over all of the routes and those giving way to open cars in the summer. A trip to the Cape or via the Lake Shore Route was considered to be a grand outing for a summer's day. Many organizations hired trolleys to carry their groups to various places or outings similar to chartered bus service of today. As was common in those days, many of the Street Railway lines owned and operated parks along their routes. The New Bedford-Brockton line operated such a park at what is now known as the Cathedral Camp in Lakeville. Big name bands were hired to provide music for concerts and dancing. At these times, many cars were pressed into service to transport the people from surrounding towns to and from the affairs.

A Wheatless Food Demonstration car was sent over the Bay State lines in 1918, and halted at Middleboro for a public demonstration. Such tours were often made by various companies to advertise their wares.

The trolleys played an important part in the growth of the suburban areas of the towns and cities. Middleborians built in outlying areas along the trolley routes as they found that commuting to factories and positions in town was a satisfactory means of transportation to and from work.

Many local residents were employed by the trolley companies, to mention a few: Arthur S. Hall, Sr., Frank Minot, Alden Sisson, Luke Kelley, Robert Nolan, William Bernier, John Cordeiro and Harry Eaton. Employees were paid only for actual hours operating the cars and not for time between trips, so that the men found themselves spending a twelve or fourteen hour day while being paid for only eight hours or so.

The sad day came, with the increasing popularity of the automobile, that patronage of the trolleys decreased until to this date the Metropolitan Transit Authority in Boston is the only remaining trolley system in the New England area. Although the trolley played such an important role in the growth and development of Middleboro, it is lamentable to note that there remain only a few exposed sections of rail to mark this once flourishing business and popular mode of transportation.

(Editor's note: This is a concise and well searched article, and I am sorry we cannot show you other models; however, if you are really interested, we do have photographs in the museum, and I am sure John Rockwell would be glad to let you see some of the old-timers in his collection.)

REMINISCENCES OF EIGHTY YEARS ON VERNON STREET

by

Emilia Van Steenberg

Although Mr. Weston, in his History of the Town of Middleboro, does include a short and cursory history of the smallpox epidemic in Middleborough during 1777 and 1778, and comments on the pest-houses, naming as one the old Leonard house on Vernon Street, it seems as though further details might be worthy of preservation.

I was born in the old Leonard house, and have always heard anecdotes about the smallpox times when the old home was used to take care of the neighborhood. In 1777 the old house consisted of only two rooms, now the northern end, with, of course, the front door. I have always heard that two men died there in the house, and were buried nearby. Their stones are still guarding their history, though if something isn't done to preserve them soon, these records will crumble and be lost.

Mr. Thomas Paddock was a Whig, and through his last days insisted in no uncertain terms that he WOULD NOT be buried on any "Damned Tory's" property. He was buried near the stone wall just across the street on what is now George Green's farm. Being interested in genealogy and Revolutionary history, I finally discovered that his wife was buried in the Lakeville Cemetery not far from the Precinct Church. Her stone is a simple one just like her husband's, and merely states that she was the wife of Thomas Paddock who died of the smallpox.

I have not been able to find out a great deal about the other man who passed away in the old Leonard house, but have always been told he was a Richmond. His grave is marked by two common stones, head and foot, and is also just across the street near the stone wall in the northern corner of my land which runs clear down to the Taunton River. Whether he was a Tory, and annoyed Mr. Paddock during their illness, is a matter for conjecture. At any rate, their last resting places ARE at least separated by an old time stone wall boundary.

My grandfather, Nathan Williams, bought the homestead in 1848, and added the east wing in the form of summer and winter kitchens. The winter kitchen had a fireplace and also a brick oven for family baking; the summer kitchen a fireplace, north and south windows and two outside doors. Today the old place has become quite modern, with hardwood floors, artesian well, and steam heat.

In 1871, my Father and his Cousin, Hiram Richmond, grandfather of Maurice Richmond (Richmond's Automotive Service), decided that Vernon Street ought to have some trees. They planted Norway and Sugar maples for a third of a mile from one house to the other. Many a farm wagon and buggy of years ago paused in their shade and relaxed while the weary farmer or traveller gazed over the rolling meadows and watched the river wind slowly along its course. More recently, automobilists have rested on this once quiet old street in the shade of the Richmond-Shaw maples. If you hurry, you may still see this peaceful scene — but hurry — before present highway plans destroy this last vestige of what used to be.

THREE HUNDRED YEARS OF WASHBURNS

by

C. P. Washburn and L. B. Romaine

Although we cannot boast of a huge General Electric plant within our boundaries, or advertise our prosperous thriving community by pointing to a hundred million dollar atomic energy laboratory, WE CAN brag a little over fostering one of the oldest mills in the United States.

The story of C. P. Washburn and the Old Washburn Mill starts with Sir John Washburn in Eversham, England, when he decided that Great Britain was just a little bit too great for a spirited individualist who wanted to DO things his own way, has appeared in the Middleborough Gazette, The Modern Miller for January, 1942, and in The Feed Bag for September 1948. That two national magazines considered the story news makes it doubly valuable as a historical record.

Briefly, Sir John moved to Duxbury, and began milling about 1634. By the latter part of the seventeenth century, the family had moved to what is now Carver and built mills on the old South Meadow Stream at Bensons Bridges, now known as Huckleberry Corner, where there was an old stage coach stop, and probably a tavern. Ephriam Washburn operated this mill successfully until 1734, when Edward Washburn took over the business and carried on until 1794. William took charge until 1813, and Asaph continued the record to 1846, when William took charge right through to 1868. Peter Washburn moved the business to Muttock in 1879 and continued family tradition until 1887, when he decided to move the mill to a new site just south of the present location adjacent to the New Haven Railroad tracks, where he could add a small coal trade to his activities. Although E. O. Parker was taken into the business just before the turn of the century, in 1899, Charles Parker Washburn, returned to Middleboro and bought him out, so that it may be fairly said that Sir John's milling operations have never been out of control of the Washburn family for over 300 years.

Today Sir John, who was a versatile and rugged individualist, would surely smile if he could walk into C. P. Washburn's establishment. Whether you want feed for livestock, sunflower seeds for wild birds, lumber and hardware for a home, plumbing supplies without end or merely a curious cable-turnbuckle creation that no one else ever heard of — C. P. Washburn will produce it. (Ed. note: Middleboro should be justly proud of this tercentenary mill, especially on the eve of its own 300th anniversary in 1969, and stop worrying about contriving to seduce some nationally famous industry into our midst. Let's make the best of what we have, and build on our own foundations, instead of begging others to help us pay our taxes.)

(Editor's note: When a historical society loses interest in the unsung heroes whose biographies have made the history it was created to preserve, it had better disband. When a community does not support the efforts of its historical organization to preserve these records, someone ought to try to educate it. When I come to the end of an issue of this Antiquarian without wishing I had fifty more pages to fill, I'll quit.)

Unfortunately, we have run out of space. The announcement of recent acquisitions will appear in the Fall issue.

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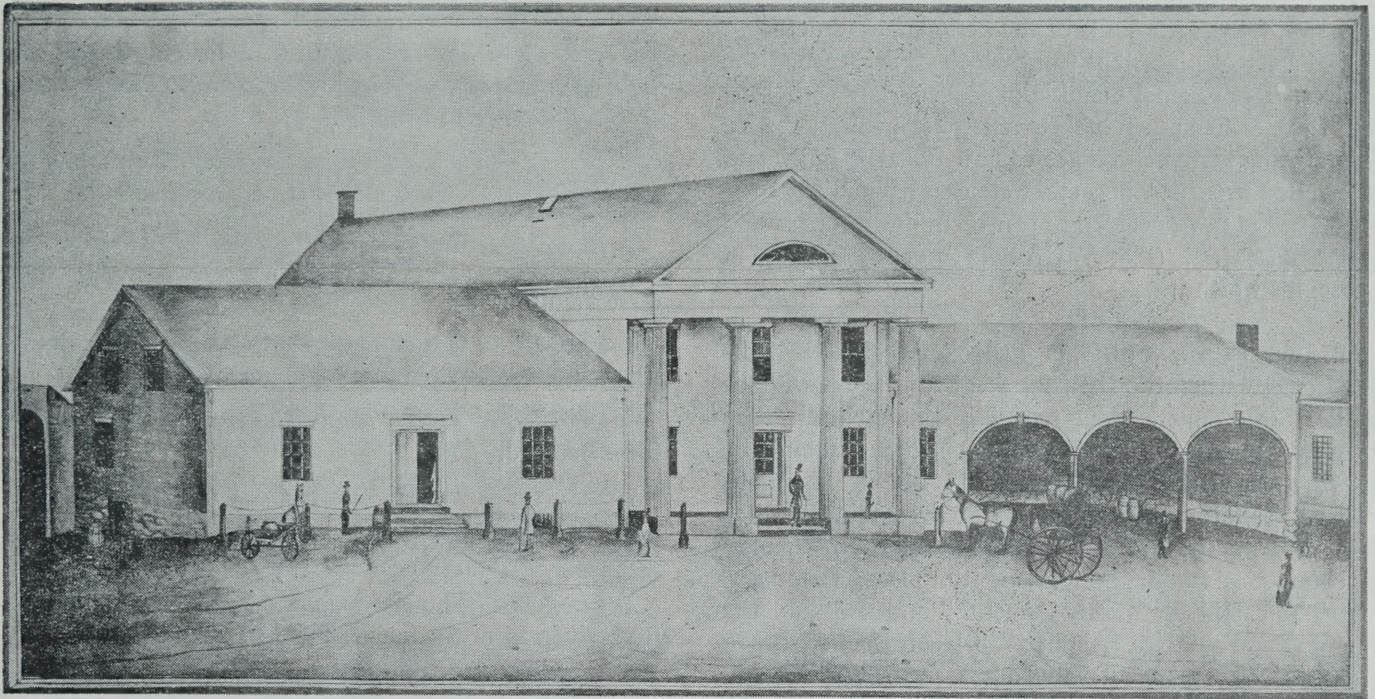


A fine wash drawing executed about 1840 of the Old Peter Peirce Store, borrowed from the walls of the law offices of Clark & Iseminger for this issue. Although Thomas Weston avoids an exact date for the erection of this fine example of Federal architecture, manuscript records recently acquired would indicate 1825 to 1830.

The only real excuse for a historical association is the preservation of history. History is written not only with a quill, pen, typewriter, mimeograph machine and printing press, but with inventions, creations, and manufactures. The Antiquarian will try to record acquisitions for a small but growing archives in our museum at the library, with an ever present hope that a day will come when there is enough interest in the town to have a home of its own.

Miss Gertrude W. Dexter of Beverly, Mass., has sent us a fine pair of Hessian andirons, an excellent example of the turned post ladder back arm chairs of the late 18th century (with a delightful 20th century pillow for the comfort of those who are dragged to museums by their more enthusiastic friends), and a fine wrought iron handled, pierced brass covered warming pan of the early 18th century. Designed by an American smith probably even before Paul Revere's birth, the pattern defies description. Better drop in and see it. Miss Dexter's 18th century hour glass, given us some years ago, is still ready to count accurately when called upon.

Mr. and Mrs. Clarence H. Hayward of 35 Oak street (at my urgent request, just in case this type of Americana does not appeal to you) gave us a folio illustrated catalogue of everything for the modern undertaker, issued by the National Casket Company in 1900. Shiver if you will at the $29.50 coffins and the flowing robes, this is American history.

Levi Tinkham used his almanacs from 1796 to 1816 as diaries. On the margins one finds the cost of cider mills, cows, carpentry and farming in general. On the lower margins for August and September for 1796 we find the following quill penned notes:

> "Town House Raised Aug. 23 — Began to Build Chimney Sept. 1."

Weston's History of the Town merely states that the Town House was completed and accepted January 2nd, 1798. A study of the manuscript ledger records of town meetings at our town hall testify that the battle for a town house began when a warrant was first offered in 1788. The heated discussions remind one of recent battles for new schools, which many of you must remember. A motion to raise one thousand dollars for the erection of a town house was finally passed by a vote of 146 to 106 at a meeting March 21st, 1796. The "votables," according to the records, met at the Town House for a meeting November 7th, 1796. All previous meetings had been held at the Easterly Precinct Meeting House. My claim is that the proper preservation of a small insignificant looking 1796 almanac erases a misleading statement in the town history. Perhaps the "votables" didn't accept it until 1798, as Fletcher Clark suggests, but it WAS built and used from November 1796 on.

The association now owns a collection of artifacts and manuscript records of the Peter H. Peirce, and Peirce & Woods store, that Old Sturbridge Village or the Massachusetts Historical Society might well be proud of. Although it is difficult to squeeze into the museum past the original 1830 desk, with its four separate slant tops, its turned pine posts and stretchers and its broad beam carrying along the top center a truly fine architectural gallery to hold the ledgers and day books, we are willing to squeeze. One of the oak strapped cracker barrels greets you in the doorway, filled with quilts of the period, and underneath you will find a set of pine steps from which clerks reached the upper shelves. The original manuscript ledgers start with 1833 and run to 1900. Three peach baskets of letters, invoices, checks, and bills are being sorted chronologically by Charlie Judge and his Mother. Bed wrenches, jugs etc. were also rescued from the old barns when the town decided to tear them down for parking areas, and progress (?). (P.S. WHAT IS progress?) Drop in and squeeze; it's worth it.

The Bennett ledger, or diary, or logbook, presented by Miss Nellie M. Bennett when the last issue went to press, is without question the earliest manuscript record in our archives. The contents would satisfy the most exacting historian should he wish to write an article on 18th century life in Plymouth County. Kept, as far as I have been able to ascertain, by three generations of Bennetts, it records fishing (and possibly whaling) as well as commercial trading from Plymouth to Long Island and Barbados. The catch was mostly "macrols" and cod, and the cargoes lumber and shingles. About 1728 Jacob Bennett began making entries of weaving, drawing deeds and surveying, and the activities of the brigantine DOVE stopped. Repentance Bennett crops up with "shares" in various "blasts" at the furnace, some I feel sure were at Judge Oliver's forge and foundry, and others at Silas Wood's furnace. The pots, "kittles," spiders, dogs, rods, etc., flourished, while Bennetts, Tinkhams, Purringtons, Williams, Hoskins, Halls, Peirces and Simmons hauled ton upon ton of iron "oar" for Silas Wood and the Judge. These Bennetts during the 18th century were fishermen, navigators, coastal traders, whalers (?), weavers, pseudo lawyers, carpenters, blacksmiths and surveyors. The ledger ends in 1775 — and why not? The colors of a new nation called, and the Bennetts answered. Judge Oliver fled to Boston, and the furnaces cooled off until 1783.

THE CAPTAIN KEEPS A LOG

by

John D. Rockwell, Jr.

Back in the latter part of the 19th century, Captain Alfred Manton, Arthur Hall's Father-in-law, sailed the seas in a stout Yankee schooner out of Calais, Maine. However, when in 1894 the Calais and St. Stevens Railway Co. built a car barn in Calais, Mrs. Manton felt she had been married to a sailor long enough, and, the Captain became a trolley landlubber. Again when the Old Colony Street Railway Co. built a carn barn in Lakeville, the Mantons made another move.

Working his way from cabin boy to foreman of the Lakeville section of the Bay State Co., he later became superintendent of this area. He was known familiarly as Jake to all his friends and took to the street railway business as he had to the sea. However, he never forgot his training on his ships, and he kept his trolley log carefully, faithfully and amusingly. (I am not responsible for any editorial additions to this selection from Jake's logbooks.)

Daily News from the Log for 1912

Jan. 1912 — Snow, sleet, ice, low temperatures bedevil the line. Reduced patronage over 1911.

Jan. 13 — Dr. Walter funeral held at Grove Chapel in Lakeville. Express car hired as hearse, also closed passenger car to carry mourners to Marion.

Jan. 21 — Fishermen from Brockton, Taunton and Middleboro rode cars to lakes, also skating parties to lakes.

Jan. 31 — Stranded sleighing party hired car for $8. to carry them from King Phillips Tavern, Lakeville to Elliott's Corner, East Taunton.

Feb. 1 — Instructors car sent over from Taunton to teach employees use of emergency equipment.

Feb. 2, 3 — Horses shipped in stock cars from Brockton to New Bedford.

Feb. 19 — Trolley line blocked by building being moved from Sampson's Tavern to Upper Four Corners. Transfer trolleys used to complete regular trips.

Feb. 20 — The last night car delayed 30 minutes at Pearl St. because of fire at Leonard and Barrows shoe factory.

Feb. 27 — Odd Fellows chartered special car for trip to New Bedford and return.

Mar. 15 — Waiting room at Precinct School blown over. Considerable damage to houses along route.

Apr. 21 — First open cars of the season used. Two extras needed to accommodate passengers.

May 14 — Brown Glee Club chartered car for concert at Middleboro, via Taunton and Bridgewater.

May 30 — Special car hired at 6:15 A.M. for Mr. Hamer at New Bedford to Court End Ave., Middleboro to make connection with Plymouth train.

June — New rails being laid necessitated many extra transfer cars.

Aug. 3 — Passenger leaving car at Bridgewater aimed revolver at No. Middleboro girl's face. Fined $50 for concealed weapons charge.

Aug. 3 — Conductor John Lang received electric shock throwing him to ground — minor injuries.

October 1 - 4 — Extra cars used for Brockton Fair.

Oct. 23 — Line was busy carrying equipment from Middleboro Trolley Freight House to Lakeville Car Barn.

Dec. 16 — Red Men chartered car to New Bedford for $26.

Dec. 16 — Andy Cooper fell from top of line car when trolley wire broke. Badly shaken up but not seriously injured.

Dec. 21 — Very heavy travel — Christmas shoppers.

Research - by Robert L. Cushing

The Old Middleborough Historical Association has often heard the phrase "Today's news is tomorrow's history." The importance of this can be vividly shown by a look at Stone's HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS INDUSTRIES, Vol. II, which was published as recently as 1930. The article was headed The Lure of the Nemasket River, and read:

"The Nemasket River drew to the town of Middleboro many manufacturers who established themselves on its banks about the beginning of the 19th century, and operated a cotton mill, a wool carding plant, woolen mills, and a forge where shovels were produced. Just a hundred years ago the first of the straw shops was built in Middleboro. They flourished for many years thereafter, all sewing being done by hand where today (1930) it is accomplished by machinery. Middleboro is no longer a straw hat center as of yore, but its busy plants are mainly devoted to shoe production, paper and wooden boxes, jewelry and motorized fire apparatus."

The list of industries found in the 1930 survey included the following (with existing firms of 1959 shown in capitals): COLONIAL BRASS COMPANY; MAXIM MOTOR COMPANY; Nemasket Worsted Mills; Alger Paper Box Company; Levi O. Atwood; Colonial Casket Company; LEONARD & BARROWS, INC. (now Plymouth Shoe Co.); Leonard, Shaw & Dean; a branch of Geo. E. Keith Co.; William H. Luther & Son, Inc.; Nemasket Press Inc.; Henry B. Schleuter Co., Faburn Manuf. Company; Better Boxes Inc.; David R. Walker (now WALKER COMPANY); Lobl Manufacturing Co.; and THE WINTHROP ATKINS COMPANY. While several of the above listed concerns were discussed in detail, the last mentioned was dismissed curtly in this way, "The Winthrop Atkins Company is engaged in the production of colored photographs."

We can only wonder what changes the next thirty years will show.

A BUSINESS GROWS IN MIDDLEBORO

by

One Who Has Watched the Elephant Grow

After serving in World War I as an Aerial Photographer and meeting many photo finishers throughout the country, Horace Atkins felt the photo finishing division of Nichols & Atkins in Harwich could be greatly expanded if a more strategic location was found. Middleboro seemed the ideal spot.

In the spring of 1919 the move to Middleboro was made and business started in a second floor loft in Everett Square. The first year, a husband and wife enterprise with one employee, proved Middleboro to be the right location.

An interesting sidelight resulted this year from our country's noble experiment in prohibition. In the early days it was necessary to keep photo chemicals in solution by the use of grain alcohol. The local authorities, seeing all this alcohol going into the building with little evidence of production, since all photo finishing was for dealers outside Middleboro, felt sure they had a moonshine still on their hands. With guns drawn, the blue coats ascended the narrow, dark stairs expecting a machine gun barrage at any minute. A thorough search proved their surmise unfounded, so a chagrined and disappointed lot of police descended the stairs to wonder how wrong they could be.

The first year of operation showed the building to be inadequate but a move was quickly prompted by a totally unrelated cause. On the first floor was a food store plagued continually with rats and to rid themselves of the vermin a rat poison was used that drove the rats outside to seek water. The rats were smart. Why go outside when upstairs were tanks of water to be had without effort. How long can one stand fishing drowned rats out of developer tanks each morning? The end of the year saw the company on the move to the Briggs Building on Center Street.

At the Center Street location the company prospered to the extent of some ten or twelve employees but again it was a second story location and water problems made a move necessary. Water, as everyone knows, seeks lower levels. With a furniture store underneath, the resulting water damage was a pleasure to the store owner but the Atkins' firm could only stand so much water damaged furniture.

In 1923 the firm was reorganized as Winthrop-Atkins Co. with Frank Winthrop and Horace Atkins as principal owners and the operation transferred to the Norris Block on North Main Street where the present Shell Station is located. The business continued to grow and in 1927 a branch was established in Providence and in 1928 a branch in New York City. The combined operation made Winthrop-Atkins Co. one of the largest photo finishing operations in the country.

Then the depression struck. People had to eat but they did not have to take pictures. The decreasing volume of business made it necessary to sell the New York City plant and consolidate the Providence plant. In spite of the depression the company, by adding the manufacture of wood frames and later paper frames and mounts, continued to grow.

Next to the Norris Block was a series of stores and as a store became vacant the company would expand into it until the operation was scattered all up and down the street and the supply of stores exhausted.

Local highlights of the Norris Block sojourn were the Cook murder in an adjoining room, again an infestation in droves of rats as the old Nemasket house and stable were torn down. Business achievement for the first time with fifty people on the local payroll and the change from mail handling of films to daily auto delivery in sixty adjoining cities and towns.

With the friendly cooperation of Frederick Lobl, Winthrop-Atkins Co. purchased the Leonard, Shaw and Dean factory on Peirce Street. In 1939 the calendar division was established and the entire space occupied.

The photo finishing business in itself is highly seasonable and the urge for new products has been to keep the work schedule for plant and employees constant throughout the year. Thus, in 1941 with film rationed and a diminishing volume in photo work, a prime war contract was procured for assembling air force crash kits to keep the plant in full operation during the war years. In the same period the desk calendar sales met with such tremendous success that by 1944 the business had outgrown the Peirce Street plant. Fortunately, the Star Mill was then vacant and this was purchased to house the calendar operation.

Despite such early calendar mistakes as using U. S. holidays on Canadian Pads, imprinting the Chinese alphabet on embossed paper so that the hieroglyphics distorted to say Chinese Back House instead of Banking House, misinterpreting new pictures for nude pictures on a church order, the business has grown until now the company is the largest producer of desk calendars in the country, shipments going to every continent in the world. Calendars are produced throughout the year but shipment is not wanted until late fall. Consequently, the storage of completed orders is a space problem. In 1954 a warehouse with over 14,000 square feet was built at Peirce Street to house raw stock and finished products.

During this period the photo finishing end of the business continued to grow, especially the taking of color pictures. In 1955 Eastman Kodak released color finishing to the public and Winthrop-Atkins immediately took steps to add color finishing to their production. Unfortunately, Middleboro water was not suitable for color finishing due to a special chemical content. The company then associated themselves with four other photo finishers and became prime stockholder in a color plant located in Boston. Local water tests are still being made with the hope this plant can eventually be removed to Middleboro.

Again during this period the company pioneered photographic Christmas cards and again the fall of 1959 finds space at a premium. Within the year a new building 60 x 220 completely air-conditioned will be constructed adjoining the Star Mill to house the printing, dieing out and high-speed glueing operations. With the contemplated consolidation of a competing plant, this will make the mount and photo Christmas card division one of the biggest in the country.

As to the future.

On the dark side: Massachusetts with its unfavorable legislative program towards business and the highest corporation tax in the country are indeed problems. Excessive transportation costs to far western states make sales in many areas prohibitive. With the greater part of the customers in the Middle West, the continual bombardment from western towns giving free moving expenses, free taxes, free buildings to relocate are always a temptation.

On the bright side: The owners are native Cape Codders, the management personnel are all from Middleboro or adjacent towns, the employees are all local and the best in the land. Middleboro, in the heart of the great recreation areas of the country with better than average schools, an excellent hospital, fine churches and a cooperative and intelligent civic life, has great moral advantages over western towns. Truly, the company and its personnel are so deeply rooted in New England Tradition that to move is unthinkable. With certain new products in the works, the future growth of Winthrop-Atkins Co., Inc. is well assured. Middleboro is its hometown.

Fortieth Anniversary Afterthought. Maybe the drowned rats in the developer tanks weren't so bad. Did you ever smell hundreds of dead herring in an abandoned sluice-way under Star Mill?

(A far cry from 1770, and yet the descendants of the Bennetts, Tinkhams, Purringtons and Peirces, aided by Cousins from nearby towns, are still creating Middleborough industrial growth.)

A PLACE FOR MEDITATION

(Culled from Existing Records)

Mrs. M. B. Skillings

At the corner of Soule and Brook Streets there is a spot of ground long since grown up to brush and trees that has always seemed to me one of the saddest lots in the United States. Why? Because in it lie the mortal remains of the Rev. Sylvanus Conant, fourth pastor of the First Congregational Church of Christ at the Green, with eight members of his church and parish, all of whom perished of the small pox. These early citizens of Middleborough died between the 5th and 18th of December in 1777. Their names were: Zachariah Eddy, Widow Rhoda Smith, Joseph Smith, Bethia Smith, William Soule, Sarah Reading and Hannah Love.

Details are meagre but in this year there were three pest houses where small pox victims were taken for care and one of them was near this wild and unsettled area. Just how Mr. Conant came in contact and was exposed history does not tell, but it is reasonable to suppose that he nursed and helped all of his parishioners, and, worn out with his kindly, tireless, friendly work, succumbed.

His successor says of him: "He was cut off from his labors in the midst of his usefulness and in the love and esteem of his large flock. He served and gave thirty-three years of his fifty-eight to his God and His work.

He came to Middleborough in 1743, finding the community in very unpleasant circumstances. Sixteen members of the church and a large part of the parish refused to let him preach, kept the records and funds in their own hands, and hired the Rev. Thomas to be their pastor.

Mr. Conant quietly continued his duties, preaching in the so-called mansion house occupied by the Widow of his predecessor, the Rev. Peter Thacher. Within two years he had so endeared himself to his people that a new meeting house was built and he was ordained in 1745. Soon many of the faction that had practically disowned him came to his church, and Mr. Weld was dismissed. The church and parish were reunited and have remained so ever since.

It is regrettable that so good a man should have left no descendants. We are not certain of his first wife's name. It might have been Bethia — or Miss Bethune. She died within a year, and he married Miss Williams of Roxbury. She lived a number of years and a daughter, Hannah, was born to them, but died in infancy. He married a third time to Miss Abigail Huntington of Norwich, Conn. She joined the church and bore him a son Hezakiah who was baptised but also died in infancy. She died in 1759. The lonely widower adopted a daughter of a deceased brother who became the second wife of Daniel Thomas, and later the second wife of Captain David Thomas. Mr. Conant labored on for all of those about him and continued his work.

I am thankful that the brush and trees have at last been cleared above the graves of this little flock and their unselfish, Godly pastor, and that it is to become a fitting memorial after so many years. For, although there is a stone in the Green Cemetery bearing his name, it is meaningless. Now we shall have a spot where we can go and meditate on the debt we owe him for uniting those opposing factions in the years so long gone by.

The Middleborough Antiquarian

Published quarterly and devoted to the preservation of local history by

MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

VOLUME 2 FEBRUARY 1960 NUMBER 1

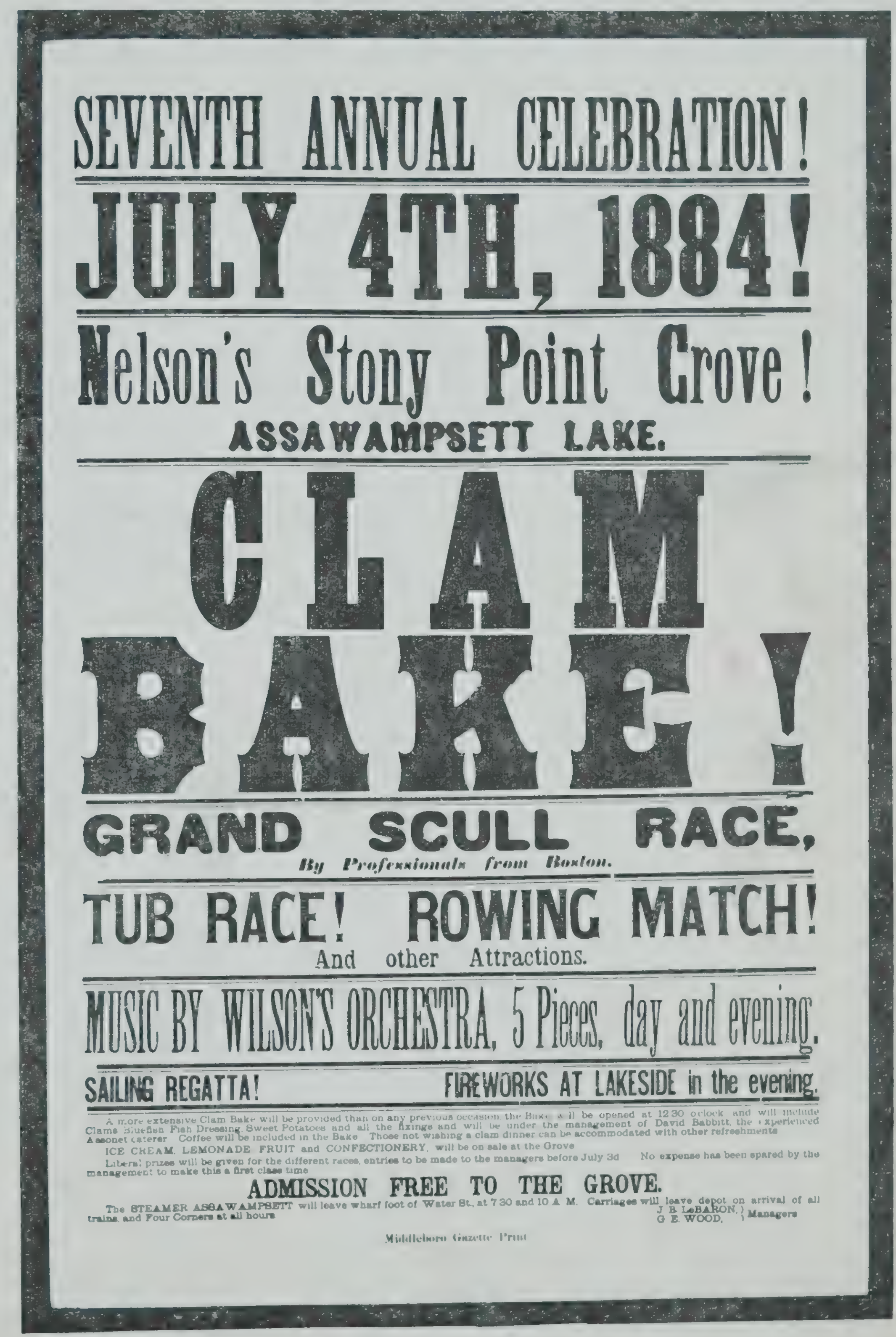
WHO'S FOR A CLAM BAKE?

Those who prefer watching the Tournament of Roses on TV while jets break the sound barrier and shatter the nerves, are welcome to both. I wish I might board the Assawampsett at the foot of Water street (now Wareham street), and steam up the river for another 1884 bake at Nelson's Stony Point Grove; I've seen scull races, tub races, rowing matches and fireworks, and heard some pretty good orchestras, but a sailing regatta on our big lake is something I'd like to watch. You will note that admission was FREE. What you spent when you got there was your own business.

To conserve space in this issue, I must refer you to Mrs. Viger's History of the Town of Lakeville for an interesting chapter on the steamboat and entertainment industry of the Nemasket and the Lakes ca. 1876 to about 1891. Here you will find illustrations of the Steamer Assawampsett, and the tickets printed by J. H. Nelson offering Special Attention to Sunday School, Lodge & Family Picnics and Clambakes, with all the fixin's.

The History of Lakeville gives you a picture of the days when the Pioneer, Assawampsett and other steamers were built and carried the enthusiastic townspeople and visitors on these gala occasions. What became of them after 1891? The Shelburne Museum has preserved its grand old Ticonderoga for future generations, but I fear the Pioneer and the Assawampsett have been lost. The least we can do is preserve them in printed and pictorial records.

I have a letter from Harold F. Dunham, and another from Ralph Sampson. I wish we had room to print them both in full. However, as usual, Ronald Thatcher will probably scream



SEVENTH ANNUAL CELEBRATION!

JULY 4TH, 1884!

Nelson's Stony Point Grove!

ASSAWAMPSETT LAKE.

CLAM BAKE!

GRAND SCULL RACE,

By Professionals from Boston.

TUB RACE! ROWING MATCH!

And other Attractions.

MUSIC BY WILSON'S ORCHESTRA, 5 Pieces, day and evening.

SAILING REGATTA! FIREWORKS AT LAKESIDE in the evening.

A more extensive Clam Bake will be provided than on any previous occasion, the Bake will be opened at 12 30 oclock and will include Clams Bluefish Fish Dressing Sweet Potatoes and all the fixings and will be under the management of David Babbitt, the experienced Assonet caterer Coffee will be included in the Bake Those not wishing a clam dinner can be accommodated with other refreshments

ICE CREAM, LEMONADE FRUIT and CONFECTIONERY, will be on sale at the Grove

Liberal prizes will be given for the different races, entries to be made to the managers before July 3d No expense has been spared by the management to make this a first class time

ADMISSION FREE TO THE GROVE.

The STEAMER ASSAWAMPSETT will leave wharf foot of Water St., at 7 30 and 10 A M. Carriages will leave depot on arrival of all trains and Four Corners at all hours

J. B. LeBARON, } Managers
G. E. WOOD, }

Middleboro Gazette Print

"off with his head," — or was that what I dreamed last night? Probably I shall have to cut the acquisitions again, and perhaps disappoint the generous souls who keep this organization alive by reminding us of our purpose in being.

About 1909 Harold Dunham and his Cousin used to borrow the rowboat hitched to a post back of the pumping station from the engineer (probably Mr. Gurney or Mr. Standish), and row across the river to what then remained of the old Assawampsett. She was a flat bottomed affair of shallow draft whose sidings were even then fast rotting away. The ribs were about seven feet long. The decks were missing entirely in 1909. Harold and his Cousin probably played pirates and fought off the federal black snakes who tried to board their vessel. (Harold doesn't say this — merely an editorial conjecture). Being an active and interested member of the association, Harold asks questions in this letter, as well as giving his own recollections. Ralph Sampson answers most of them.

Ralph Sampson went to work at the pumping station in 1913 for Mr. Henry E. Standish. Mr. Standish showed him the old hull and told its history. When the City of Taunton built the gate house about 1891 at the head of the river, the vessel was pulled up on the bank near the East Grove street bridge. Sometime later she broke loose and floated to the bridge, wedging against the abutments and blocking the river entirely. She was then pulled up stream into the cove across from the pumping station to rot. The engine (as Harold also notes) was used for years to haul ice at LeBaron's ice houses. The famous hinged smokestack was left in the meadow and rusted completely away. Ralph remembers that during World War I two boys carrying a long birch pole between them ripped off all the iron parts, hung them on the pole like a string of herring, and trotted them away for scrap iron. During the Summer of 1960 I hope these notes may inspire someone to dig for the keel. Perhaps — just maybe — those lads couldn't carry it away. Maybe they left us ONE herring as a memento of the July 4th, 1884 Clambake. (I am very grateful to this team of Dunham and Sampson, and hope it may inspire other members to contribute in the future).

CHARCOALING

or

BURNING FOR CHARCOAL

By Susan B. Brackett

An industry probably entirely unknown to the present generation, and possibly even to their parents, was that of "Coaling."

Our woodlands indicate to a practiced observer that from earliest times this occupation was followed by some of our ancestors who settled at Plymouth and the surrounding territory. Pits have been identified in Carver, Middleboro, Rochester and Halifax, as well as in Lakeville, which of course, was originally part of our town. These pits, through the years, have become overgrown with pines. This work was carried on both as a small and large industry as late as around 1915 or 1916.

The charcoal made from soft woods was used by private families for kindling, and from hard woods by industrial firms such as the Copper Works located at the rear of the Wamsutta Mills in New Bedford. The Copper Works had their own kiln, or pits, where they made their own charcoal. The Hartleys in Rochester used to cart wood to them to be used for this purpose. During this same period the Morse Twist Drill in New Bedford also used charcoal and, of course, industries like these required thousands of bushels. It was used by smaller industries as well, even by peanut vendors.

The last of this industry was carried on in the southerly part of our town, and among those who did this work was Mr. Isaac Tinkham (father of Henry C. Tinkham, whom some of our older readers will remember.) He worked alone, and also at one time was in partnership with Mr. Artemas Morse. They both lived at the southwest end of Miller Street in Rock, and at one period carried on the business in that section of Highland Street near the junction with Benson Street, the pits being way back in the woods. Later Mr. Tinkham sold out to George T. M. Gammons. This was around 1890 and Mr. Gammons carried on the business, first at the head of Perry Street where he was living at the time. Later his home burned and he moved to Highland Street to the house now occupied by Ralph Creamer where he lived for several years, and continued the business there until around 1905 or 1906.

It was customary to build the pits on a woodlot where the wood had been previously cut, if possible, or within a quarter of a mile of the pit, or pits, as of course this eliminated cartage. The wood was purchased from all over the country round-a-bout, i.e., Rochester, Carver, Thomastown, etc.

Among others engaged in this occupation were Mr. John H. Ryder, Mr. John Flansburg and Mr. Lucius M. Fuller, in the Highland and Walnut Plain areas, Mr. Ira Fuller and Mr. Philip Porter in Rochester, and Mr. William Thomas, Sr., at South Middleboro. There probably were others of whom the writer is not aware.

This work was carried on from March until June, and then began again in August and was carried on until November, sometimes partly through November or entirely through that month. The area of the pits varied according to the amount of wood used in them, which was anywhere from 15 to 23 cords. This would mean the pits were from 50 to 100 feet in circumference and were from 12 to 15 feet in height. A pit of 15 to 16 cords would produce about 600 bushels of charcoal, if not burned too fast.

There were two kinds of pits, one for soft woods and another for hard woods. The soft wood charcoal was used entirely for kindling and this was what was sold mostly to private families. The soft woods used were mostly pine and sassafras. The hard woods used were hornbeam, maple, birch and ash. **NO** oak was used. The hard and soft woods could not be burned together, ever, as obviously the soft woods would burn much faster than the hard. The wood was used in three four-foot lengths and were up to 12″ to 14″ in diameter. These lengths were put up in tiers, one above the other, making the three tiers. They were put up slanting, with a "chimney" two feet square in the middle. This was filled after the pit was all done by using ladders to climb to it. The whole outside of the pit was covered with shavings, then sand was thrown on the shavings. These shavings were purchased from various sources, some from Fall Brook. Shingle shavings were considered the best. In earlier times, instead of shavings, turf was cut and used in the same way, also fresh hay, to hold the sand. Some charcoalers always used new sand every year as after a time they considered the virtue had been burned out of it. The sand had to be perfectly clean with no stones. This was obtained in different localities. A good sand was found in Rochester, near the Rochester-Middleboro line.

Occasionally a pit would explode, or "blow," it was called. It would blow sand and shavings off five or ten feet from the ground and sometimes only four or five feet. Then the men had to hustle and get it back in because the fire would be burning the wood but not charcoaling.

Every part of the tree was used. There was no waste whatever. The last thing that was done was to "slick" a pit with the small stuff, down to 1″ or 2″ in circumference. The "slicking" was to smooth the whole pit off so it would be entirely even. It took two weeks to "coal a pit" of hard wood and ten to twelve days for soft wood to "coal down."

The amount of charcoal obtained in a season would run to thousands of bushels, say 3,000 to 4,000, or even 8,000 to 10,000, or to meet the demand, whatever it might be. In order to store this product there was a process called "Cribbing." This was when the coal was put into cribs and stored to be sold in the winter. These cribs were made of rails 12′ by 12′, put closely together. One end was 9′ or 10′ high and was double boarded at the top to keep the contents dry. The lower end was made so rails could easily be taken out, like a pair of bars, to remove the coal.

In order for the pit to burn they had what were called "foot holes" at the bottom for draft. If the fire was burning too fast these were shut off by shoveling dirt and shavings right back in, and this would direct the draft wherever they wanted it. This was the first draft place. The second one was four or five feet from the ground in the second tier of wood. Here is an instance of what could happen. Mr. John H. Ryder was experimenting with a cedar pit. It was "pulled down" at 9:00 a.m. After 11:00 a.m. no fire was seen. One man stayed on until 12:00 at night and all seemed well. The second man came on and stayed until 2:00 a.m. Again everything seemed all right. At 4:30 the third man went out and immediately noticed heat was coming from the coal, got busy and "hauled out," and only about six bushels were lost. There was no blaze, just heat.

Sometimes a man's foot would go in above his ankle, but the sand and the fact that the other foot was on solid ground, would enable him to keep his balance and come clear uninjured.

In order to "keel up the pit" the sand and shavings were removed and the sand put back on the coal again to put the fire out. A strip six or seven feet wide from the bottom to the top would be removed and then again all the way around the pit. This process was carried on the first day and it would take about all day to do it. The brands had to be taken out. These were pieces of wood with ends burned off which were used over again to "dress the pit," after the fire was started in a new pit. On the second day they begain to "haul" a place out and put sand on again, same as the first day. It took three days in all to take a pit down. This had to be watched for 36 hours. After that, if wind didn't blow, it did not have to be watched so closely, while the pit was "coaling." They started on this work of "hauling down" at 4:00 a.m. By 8:00 a.m. the pit would be done. By 10 o'clock there would be no fire and they would bag it up in the afternoon.

It was in 1897 that putting the coal up in bags commenced. Before that time it had been carted loose and delivered in baskets. The product was sold either by the bushel or by the bag, a bag holding two bushels. In order to fill a bag they had what was called "a little horse" to hold the bag. The coal was shoveled into baskets and then the bags filled.

These baskets were called "raking baskets." These were made by Mr. Henry White, a well known basket maker who had his shop at Rock. These baskets were made about 2′ by 3′, the back being 5 or 6″ higher and the sides started from the back and went down to nothing. This was so the coal could be raked right from the pit into them. The men carried these on their heads and would then dump the coal. Before 1910 they had wagons with bins and the charcoal was measured out at the customer's door in baskets. These wagons were called "coal wains" and had flaring sideboards. They were drawn by horses. A wagon held 225 bushels in bags. If loose, about 175 bushels.

A by-product of the charcoaling business was the selling of "brazes" for poultry. These were the pieces of bark that came off when the pit was "keeled up." (Remember, "keeling" was taking off the shavings, removing brands and short pieces of wood that had not coaled.) These brazes ranged from the size of a nickel to a quarter and sold for 10c a bushel.

The charcoal dealer started out to deliver around two or three o'clock in the morning to reach his customers. In this vicinity the greater part of his product was delivered in New Bedford, although some was taken to Taunton. The price of a bag (2 bushels) of the hard wood charcoal was 35c. Soft wood charcoal was 24c or 25c per bag.

When a dealer delivered coal he was always accompanied by his "tally man." The story used to be told in New Bedford that certain tally men would engage in conversation with a passer-by and get so interested that he would not be paying proper attention to his duty; whereupon the man making the delivery would put a few pieces of coal into his basket, go in, and then call to the tally man who would, of course, note it down. I am certain this was not a practice followed by the majority.

It took two men one day to set up a pit, if the wood was close by. Otherwise the number of men employed would vary according to the distance the wood had to be carted. Four or five men were generally employed all during the season, at $1.50 per day for a nine-hour day, but if it was necessary to watch the pit twenty-four hours the wages were the same.

NOTE: For detailed description of the process of charcoaling the writer is indebted to Mr. Henry L. Ryder of Rock, whose father was John H. Ryder mentioned in this article.

(Ed's. note. I have consulted several exhaustive encyclopaedias in American industrial fields and find nothing about coaling or charcoaling. These massive volumes all treat charcoal as an important fuel but give no data on its manufacture. I feel that this article of Mrs. Brackett's is a very important contribution not only to the Antiquarian, but to American research libraries through the Country.)

William H. Crapo 1876 - 1959

Abraham Lincoln said that he liked to see a man proud of the place in which he lived, and to see him live so that the place would be proud of him. I can think of no member of our association who so perfectly fits President Lincoln's requirements. One of our past presidents as well as one of our most active, enthusiastic, loyal hard working members, we will miss him far more than we can realise as we try to carry on without him.

TOM PEIRCE and PUDDIN'SHIRE BROOK

Contributed by Emila Van Steinburg

My Brother-in-law, William C. Leonard, used to tell a story that has always seemed amusing enough to warrant preservation. When Tom Peirce used to spend his days in the old store, he sat on what is now known as a Captain's chair placed directly in front of the center window upstairs. His cuspidor was carefully placed at his right on the floor. Here he watched people come and go, up and down the street, in and out of the store; when he saw someone he wanted to see and chat with he went down — the rest of the day he hid from those he didn't care "to have any truck with."

His housekeeper came to the store once a week and swept the place clean. When doing her duty, as she saw it, she put the chair against the front wall and pushed the spittoon over beside it, cleaned up the floor, and went home.

Tom put up with this inconvenience as long as he could stand it. One morning when he probably wished all women and housekeepers would stay at home where they belonged, he decided to put his chair where HE wanted it, and the cuspidor in the most convenient range, and see that they stayed put. He took a hammer from the shop with some good long spikes, nailed all four legs to the floor right in front of the window, and secured the spitton in place for the last time. They were never moved again.

Puddin'shire Brook crosses Pleasant street just south of Cedarvale Rest Home, and then romps along to join Porquoy Brook. My great, great grandfather used to know the man who inadvertently named it. Riding home one day long ago in colonial times before the American Revolution, during the hottest, dryest July in ages, he stopped to water his horse. As the horse drank, splashed with his hoofs and swished flies, the bag of meal on the saddle behind him sprung a leak. As it spilled the golden grain, on its way home to make bread, biscuits and puddings, it became one sided, so to speak, and slowly slid off the horse's back into the stream. The little pool in Puddin'shire Brook looked just like a sure 'nough pudding, and the name has stuck ever since.

Correction Volume 1, No. 4. "Research - Robert L. Cushing." Stone's HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS INDUSTRIES, Vol. 2, 1930 is at fault. H. L. Thatcher & Company have been printing for not only Middleborough but for national industries ever since 1870.

ACQUISITIONS

We are indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Basil D. Hall of Westport Point for a fine collection of manuscript material covering about a hundred and twenty-five years. The fine polished calf, gilt lettered day book of Philander Washburn & Co. (front cover inscription: "P. Washburn & Co. 4 Corners") is a fine ten year record of groceries, meats and provisions from 1835 to 184 With this ledger under one arm, and the ledger from the Peter H. Peirce Store for the same decade under the other, any student historian could easily write an accurate account of Middleborough's food, clothing and shelter for this period. The box of deeds, documents and letters, starting with General Abiel Washburn's days, would easily fill five years of the Antiquarian. One document is a purchase agreement between John and Thomas Morton, and Abiel Washburn, for one eighth share in the Iron Works and Coal House, Yard and Tools, across the river in F'town in 1795. Will someone please check this and report on the present state of this foundry?

Mrs. William H. Crapo has given us a mass of manuscript accounts, photographs and records that will take some little time to properly classify and catalogue.

William Gardiner, Chief of Police, has entrusted to our care for preservation the Indian artifacts dug up on Cherry street recently. The two pipes are well worth seeing. The small skinning knife might be of Indian or Yankee manufacture. The two other rusted pieces I refuse to identify.

Mrs. Peter Oliver has sent us a generous check to bolster our Antiquarian budget, and to make sure that the publication continues to record unprinted Middleborough history.

Wallace Austin, curator of the Old Colony Historical Society, has sent us a photograph of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Thumb. Lavinia is smiling, and Tom's cigar has gone out.

The Civil War papers of Dura Weston, Jr., and Dura F. Weston, both of Lakeville, have come to us through the loyal interest of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Burkland and the generosity of Annie H. Weston. Both Father and Son enlisted in the 4th Massachusetts Regiment of Volunteers. The well preserved leather wallet contains the enrollment and discharge papers, the promotion of Dura F. Weston to the post of sergeant, and the oath he was forced to sign when a prisoner at Brashear City, La., Headquarters, C. S. Forces South of the Red River, June 25, 1863. Dura Weston, Jr.'s bill for clothing on his enlistment Sept. 19th, 1862 was $30.97. I wish we had that uniform.

Question:
What is worse than being limited by a mere twenty-four hour day?

Answer:
Being limited to four pages four times a year. (Ed's. note)

Thanks to James A. (Doc) Tallman of Vine street, we now have an almost complete file of the day books and ledgers of the Peirce Store. Mr. Tallman recently gave us two of the day books with indices covering the period from 1840 to 1870. These both supplement the main ledgers which we have already.

Too many people ask who compiles the Antiquarian. They should have an answer. I have been under the impression that modesty hidden under the title of curator was commendable. Considering the millions of articles, pamphlets and periodicals that have been written under pseudonyms there is another reason, and hardly modest. I think it is time that I openly admit that I have been responsible for the Antiquarian to date, and stand by to defend it against the criticism it deserves.

Lawrence B. Romaine, Ed.

(N. B.) Read your Middleboro Gazette Jan. 21, 1960 - Page 3

The Middleborough Antiquarian

Devoted to the preservation of local history by

MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

VOLUME 3 FEBRUARY 1961 NUMBER 1

MUSEUM IS PROGRESSING

Every effort is being made by the Museum Committee to have the restoration work completed in time to have the Museum open this Summer. The present plans call for the completion of the house nearest Main Street first, although windows and roof repairs will be done on both houses. As soon as warm weather arrives, the real work will commence. There will be need for volunteer help at that time. You will be kept advised.

Under the leadership of the JayCees, all organizations in town are being urged to plan fund-raising projects to help defray the costs. Already the Little Theatre Group has put on a very successful play for the benefit of the Museum. Thanks go to the many members of the Historical Association who helped by buying tickets. All of the returns are not yet in, so the amount to come to the Museum is not yet known.

* * * * * * * *

ENOCH PRATT (1808 - 1896)

The arteries and veins of any historical organization should be filled, and kept filled, with acquisitions; the heart that distributes the history that these acquisitions represent must be properly catalogued. Thanks to Mrs. Witbeck and her staff this heart or core is being properly catalogued, so that when our Museums are ready for the public, historians, students and collectors will be able to tap these arteries and veins to discover otherwise unknown facets of American history.

Enoch Pratt is listed in the Dictionary of American Biography as a capitalist, philanthropist, a shrewd, honest, quick-witted and public-spirited man who took New England qualities to the predominantly Southern City of Baltimore and made a fortune which he devoted to promoting education and health. He was born in North Middleborough. He became a close friend of Andrew Carnegie, and was instrumental in starting the great chain of Carnegie Free Libraries throughout the country. The Enoch Pratt Free Library of Baltimore is today one of our greatest educational depositories. Mr. Carnegie called him his pioneer. He did not, like many great men, forget his own small North Middleboro, but left us the Pratt Free School.

NEXT MEETING

Monday, February 6, 1961

Junior High School Musicorium

8:00 P. M.

Speaker: Mr. Alan R. Lindsay

A MINIATURE PORTRAIT OF

MIDDLEBOROUGH IN THE CIVIL WAR

Refreshments

All this you may find in most American biographical dictionaries. The little, insignificant and more personal recollections you may find only in such collections as our own. When Mrs. Witbeck completes her job we will all be surprised at the source material we have preserved for future generations. The old story about hiding historical lights in bushel baskets is before us, for in mere bushel baskets we did rescue thousands of letters like the one now set before you - the little man and the BIG man, the local philanthropist and the national benefactor.

Mr. Pratt learned the iron industry from the crude nail-making carried on in the homes of the farmers in his neighborhood. At fifteen years of age he left Bridgewater Academy for a seven year's clerkship (in the hardware business) in Boston. He remarked on leaving, "I suspect I am old enough to do considerable business."

On June 7th, 1825, he wrote home to his friend, George Pickens, of North Middleborough, and this letter is so typical of the lost fragments of American biography this organization is trying to save, we feel it is worth reprinting.

Boston June 7th 1825

"Dear Sir,

I understand by Mr. Perkins that he had a letter from you and wished us to write I started this morning to write a short mess of stuff the same as usual there is not any news a flying in this City now but all is directed to the Bunker Hill Monument there will be a grand time when the Corner Stone is laid

(Continued on the other side)

ENOCH PRATT
(Continued from first page)

(17th June) I shall look for you down about that time as well as the rest of the true Yankees in Titicutt which I presume will honor us with a visit you I believe are a great hand for music and you will have some that will make your hair stand straight up I expect to see no less than 6 or 8 Bands all in a row Genl. LaFayette will attend us (as) well as a number of distinguished Patriots he (Genl. LaFayette) met with a serious accident a short time since by the Steam Boat sinking which you may have heard before this time I expect yesterday was election but not much going on worth recording it being a rainy day(and) but very little fun they are now propping up the Charlestown Bridge they think there will be so many people June 17th that it will give way."

There is more to this letter -- there are two pages of poetry about the dry goods business in Boston in 1825. It closes with a long list of Aldens, Richmonds, Aldriches, Leaches, Kings, Kingmans, Burgesses, Clarks and Threshers to whom he wishes especially to be remembered. Our space is limited. This is the historical meat for the record.

As you read histories of Boston or listen to long addresses and speeches, do you remember any such delightful details? Manuscript history by an eye witness, with no other repository to turn to but the local historical associations of the Country. Shall we preserve them for future printed records for the millions, or let them slip into oblivion with each inevitable Spring cleaning?

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ACQUISITIONS

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In spite of a Winter that has been cold enough to chill the most ardent enthusiasm, the following loyal supporters of the Middleborough Museum have continued to present us with historical memorabilia: Mrs. Gertrude W. Dexter of Beverly, Mass., Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred S. Keyes of Middleboro, Mr. & Mrs. Paul D. Sullivan of Middleboro, Mrs. Herbert S. Sylvester of Middleboro, Mr. Wendell D. Fuller of Watertown, Mass., and a southern librarian who wishes to remain anonymous. There are, of course, many others who have given their time and thought and worldly goods toward the realization of Historic Jackson Street. Our thanks to all of them.

The Middleborough Antiquarian

Devoted to the preservation of local history by

MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

VOLUME 3 APRIL 1961 NUMBER 2

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NEXT MEETING

Monday, April 3, 1961

Junior High School

Musicorium

8:00 P.M.

Speaker

Mr. Alan R. Lindsay

A MINIATURE PORTRAIT OF

MIDDLEBOROUGH IN THE

CIVIL WAR

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MANY THANKS!

The Officers and Directors of the Association, and the Museum Committee wish to thank the Members for the wonderful turn-out at the Special Town Meeting. Your attendance made possible the affirmative vote that brings us ownership of the Jackson Street property to house our Museum.

Our thanks go also to the Little Theatre Group for their benefit performance which attracted a large audience in spite of the ice and snow in the midst of one of the toughest winters in years; to Girl Scout Troop #22 for their time and effort given in our behalf; to the Junior Cabot Club and the Lions Club whose outstanding performances brought a tremendous turn-out; and last, only in date, to the Palm Sunday Flower Show presented by Ray Meehan and Jim Butler, in which Bud Emory and Patricia Hoy as General and Mrs. Tom Thumb, dressed and managed by Miss Alice Begley, stole the show. The support of these events in such outstanding numbers indicates that Middleboro is behind the Middleboro Historical Association and its Historical Museum

LOOKING BACK

Any historical periodical has a right now and then to turn back the pages, and recall its contributions. The Antiquarian is rather proud of the fact that in two short years an index is already needed. Historical Societies in various parts of the country have already requested certain issues for articles written by our members. Let's go back and take a look.

Volume 1, #1, traced the activities of the Association from its organization on June 14, 1922, pointing out in a general way the importance of our collections, as well as the national recognition of many of our citizens, from the exploits of Deborah Sampson in the Revolution to the entertainment of the entire world by General and Mrs. Tom Thumb. The illustration on the front of the first issue of the old Bay State Straw Works is in itself, pictorial Americana of the first water, not to be found in any other history of New England.

Our second issue records in print a colorful story of the coming of the Old Colony Railroad to Rock Village with some little known facts about early industries at The Rock. William H. Crapo, one of our oldest and most active members, who passed away in 1960, contributed his own memories of the Peirce Brothers; there is nothing in our Middleboro town history that gives us such a personal picture of these men who did so much for their home town. Robert L. Cushing added an etymological story of the many spellings from 1681. Are we Middleberry, Middleborough or Middleboro? Rose E. S. Pratt searched the history of the Le Baron Foundry from 1855 and added many interesting details to the simple facts in Weston. Ward Stetson gave us MIDDLEBOROUGH IN THE WAR OF THE REVOLUTION, adding little known bits of history from his own collections. Mertie E. Witbeck contributed CAMP JOE HOOKER 1862-1918 and placed in print for future research her own recollections of the mock battles and other activities during the first World War, giving real meaning to our front page illustration (that the editor misdated due to some scribbled dates on the original photograph). Last, but far from least, Theodore N. Wood interpreted a portrait of William R. Peirce in his own inimitable way with anecdotes of his own personal boyhood recollections. Those who are privileged to read these accounts of Will Crapo and Theo. Wood will really know the Peirce Brothers as no ordinary history could introduce them.

Vol. 1, #3, offered a fine photocopy of the South Purchase executed in June 1776 by Jacob Bennett, Jr., and presented to the Association by Nellie M. Bennett. Mrs. Brackett rescued for the printed record REMINISCENSES WHILE PURSUING THE NEW TOWN MAP IN 1889 from a scrap book owned by Mrs. Emily Horton, of Attleboro, loaned to her by Miss Shirlie C. Clark. Rose Pratt again came to the editor's rescue with FIVE GENERATIONS OF PRATTS AND WHERE THEY LIVED. In the same issue John D. Rockwell, Jr., our local New England trolley historian, produced for the record THE BIRTH AND BURIAL OF MIDDLEBORO'S TROLLEY CARS. The last car? Sept. 5, 1919 -- operators, Alden Sisson and Charles Lawrence. The illustration is from a fine old negative -- the story an easy-to-read, factual history of life in Middleboro before the automobile took over. Mrs. Emilia

Continued on page 3

GETTING OUR HOUSE IN ORDER FOR THE BIG MOVE

One of the most time consuming, but certainly one of the most fascinating pursuits, I have ever undertaken is the cataloging and identifying of the literally thousands of items now in the Historical Room at the library,but which will eventually be moved to our new Museum. Order must be brought our of the chaos before the move takes place. No longer can objects be pushed through the door into the Historical Room and the door quickly closed, as Larry Romaine has been doing these many years(everything from a baby's cradle to an embalming board) but each article,each deed, each letter, each photograph (of which alone there are hundreds) must be labeled, numbered, entered in the accessions book, and catalog cards made for each item, so that there will be an authentic record of what the Middleborough Historical Association owns.

While executing these delightful duties, I have come across most interesting bits of information. Old scrapbooks that have come into the collection furnish fascinating reading and shed light on many dwellings and people of the good old days in Middleboro.

I often look out of my living room window and wonder about the exact location of Middleboro's first Town House, which stood somewhere near the traffic lights on South Main Street,but no one has seemed to know exactly where. I found my answer in a photograph, unearthed from beneath a pile of other pictures and boxes which showed the old Town House in close proximity to the present Walter Alger House. For years there was a circular drive to be plainly seen,extending from the street across the front of the Alger house and on across the empty lot on the corner. This photograph clearly shows the same driveway curving in from the street across the front of the Alger house and extending across the front of the old Town House and down to Main Street.This small,square edifice, one story with its peaked roof, topped in some pictures with a cupola in some without, was dedicated in January 1798 and used until the present Town Hall was built in 1873.

I have heard Mr. Samuel Hathaway, former custodian of the public library, relate the story of how money was appropriated for the new Town Hall. There was much opposition to spending money for this purpose because it would increase taxes.Town meeting after town meeting was held to discuss the subject. Finally, one individual,thinking to be facetious, made the motion that the sum of $50,000 be appropriated for a new Town Hall, never thinking anyone would be so rash as to vote such a sum. Much to the individual's astonishment, the motion was seconded and passed with hardly a dissenting vote. Thus our present imposing Town Hall came into existence.

Old copies of the Antiques Magazine contained two articles of genuine interest to Middleboreans. In the issue of July, 1922 is a full page photograph of the State Bed of General Tom Thumb. The text under the picture states at the time the picture was taken, the bed was the property of the Bradford Arms in Plymouth.Through friends and Miss Rose Briggs, Curator of Pilgrim Hall, we learn that Bradford Arms as such no longer exists. It was formerly a tea room and antiques shop conducted by a Miss Helen Finney, in a house on Court Street that used to be occupied by Tabitha Plaskett,Plymouth's first school teacher.Upon the death of Miss Finney, the bed was offered to the Antiquarian House of Plymouth but since the bed could not be taken apart, it was impossible to carry it through any door of the Antiquarian House. It was returned to the Finney Estate, and no one seems to know what has become of it. You may be sure we are working on it, and hope to find out. The bed, according to the picture, was an elaborate affair, carved, and with ornate hangings. It surely would be a handsome addition to our Museum.

In Antiques of May 1922, there is a photograph of a lovely corner cupboard with the explanation,"Little Known Masterpieces: V Corner Cupboard from the Barrows House in Middleboro, Mass., built in 1700, owned by Miss Mary F.Dexter of Mattapoisett, Mass." In a recent letter from Miss Dexter, who now lives in Beverly, Mass., and who has been most generous in sending gifts for our Historical Museum,she states the cupboard was given to her Mother by Miss Sarah Barrows(whom many of us remember as living,years ago,in the house on the corner of North Main and Reland Streets). Miss Dexter has been told the cupboard was originally built into an older Barrows house which also stood on North Main St.

Knowing that the Historical collection had long since overflowed the Historical Room into the upper hall and the attic of the library,we decided to take a look in these regions. Among MANY other articles, we found three old wooden cradles, two of which had unusually interesting histories. One was loaned the Association by the Jenks family and was used in the family of Major Levi Peirce, the founder of Peirce Academy.

The second, and oldest of the cradles in the collection,was loaned the Association by the Halifax Historical Society. This cradle belonged originally to Judge Oliver and was confiscated by the "Patriots" at the time of the Revolutionary War. Later Judge Oliver's belongings were sold at auction. Several pieces, including the cradle,were purchased by Thomas Drew of Halifax. He loaded them all on his wagon and carried them home. He was the object of considerable ribbing from his friends regarding the cradle, because he purchased it just two weeks prior to his marriage in 1776.

And so it [illegible], surprises at every turn. But there a[illegible] many questions to which we have not yet found the answers. For example, some of the first gifts to the Historical Association, when it was first organized, were from Miss Etta Atwood.Who was Miss Atwood? Any information regarding her will be appreciated. We shall, no doubt,be calling on you often for help to answer such questions as this.

- Mertie E. Witbeck

LOOKING BACK

Continued from page one

Van Steenberg, one of our most dedicated genealogists, wrote up her REMINISCENCES OF EIGHT YEARS ON MOUNT VERNON STREET, which included many of the little things a child hears from the family, but seldom ever reads in print; that portion of history that is the sacred duty of small historical societies to rescue and preserve in print. C. P. Washburn gave us some fascinating mill history from Sir John Washburn, 1634 to date, in his story, THREE HUNDRED YEARS OF WASHBURNS.

Issue #4 closed the first volume with a fine photograph by Winthrop-Atkins Co., - in fact, they have done all of our illustrations) - of the old Peirce general store, now restored to become our court house and police station. The original hangs in the offices of Clark & Iseminger though we have another wash drawing in the same period (ca. 1840) in the museum. Copies of this issue were requested by Old Sturbridge Village and other institutions for their files.

From this photograph of 1840 we jump with John D. Rockwell, Jr.,to 1912, and in his notes, rescued from the manuscript journal. kept by Arthur Hall's father-in-law Alfred (Jake to his friends)Manton, find recorded incidents and accidents on the many trolley lines serving the town. THE CAPTAIN KEEPS A LOG is good reading. Robert L. Cushing again sat down and outlined Middleboro's industrial record, showing the death rate of manufacturing, and at the same time, proving all over again the simple statement that today's news is tomorrow's history; if you don't make notes NOW you'll forget them tomorrow. Horace Atkins, the busiest man in Middleboro, took time out to give us A BUSINESS GROWS IN MIDDLEBORO. This is the too-often unwritten history that never finds its way into print, and is forgotten. Can you remember the first Winthrop-Atkins calendars even now? Mrs. Maude B. Skillings,another of our most loyal members, recalled in A PLACE FOR MEDITATION the sad story of Rev. Sylvanus Conant and the small pox epidemic of 1777.

Vol.2 #1 pictured a huge broadside of the Seventh Annual Celebration and Clam Bake at Nelson's Stony Point Grove, July 4th, 1884, with a story of the old steamer Assawampsett from many members who well remembered the days when our lakes teemed with local activities. This issue is valuable especially for CHARCOALING,OR BURNING FOR CHARCOAL written by Mrs. Brackett. The details of this old industry have been given proper attention, and Mrs. Brackett "done h[illegible]self proud" enough to have this issue f[illegible]d in a good many historical society li[illegible]aries not only in New England but in several state libraries. Mrs. Van Steenberg closed the issue with reminiscences of TOM PEIRCE AND PUDDIN' SHIRE BROOK.

Vol. 2, #2, leaves on the record a fine photograph of the old Nemasket House through the courtesy of L. Charles Judge, our Assistant Curator, and indefatigable artist-photographer, as well as his story A PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION OF THE PEIRCE PAPERS, rescued, you may remember, when the demolition of Jackson street began, and the old Peirce farm barns were torn down.

#3 placed before our audience and on the record a photograph of the old Thomas S. Peirce home on North Main Street. Mrs. Skillings again put her shoulder to the editorial wheel, writing MIDDLEBOROUGH'S MILITARY RECORD for us. You will find THOMAS SPROAT PEIRCE, A FACTUAL FANTASY, by Clinton E. Clark, (star reporter and photographer for the Gazette)fascinating. Not dusty, musty history, but an article to take to bed with you and really enjoy. Robert L. Cushing again rolled up his sleeves and produced A TRIBUTE TO THE AMATEUR DIGGER,being a short story of the discoveries at the Lakes by the Mass. Archaeological Society, and its devoted diggers -- historians of the shovel and trowel.

Due to the acquisition of our future museum on Jackson Street,the Tom Thumb collection and other financial obligations, the fourth issue of Volume 2 (inadvertently numbered 3 also) became a mimeographed short-short-story skeleton of its former self. It contributes what will, we hope, become the history of a new era in the life of the Association - news of committees,activities on the part of groups and organizations, and accomplishments in the field of DOING rather than recording. The printing and recording will come into its own again as soon as Jackson Street begins to remind us of Sturbridge Village, Plymouth Plantation and Cooperstown.

Volume 3 carries on in the same vein,with a few contributions from manuscripts in the archives that our museum director is slowly bringing to light in her tremendous efforts to catalogue our accumulation of thirty odd years.

#2,herewith,slapped together in haste but with determination born of this miserable schedule of having but twenty four hours in each day, is, we hope, a short record proving the value of continuing the Antiquarian. If its pages have contributed, not only to your own pleasure and daily life, but to our local historical appreciation of our place in the annals of New England,it will serve its purpose to keep us posted on what should be put down in black and white before it is lost for future generations.

- Lawrence B. Romaine

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MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

Established 1922

VOLUME IV JUNE 1962 NUMBER III

The Baptist Church and The Peirce Academy

LIFE BEGINS AT FORTY

The above title of a book, which was published a number of years ago, has a special meaning for our Association this year as we are celebrating our 40th Anniversary. Things have really happened for us in the past year with the acquisition of our Museum property from the Town just a year ago last March. Already our new Museum has come to life, with the restoration, both inside and out of one house. The second is well under way. Outside work is almost completed. Inside, in the wing, we have the restoration of the Peirce store, and the finishing of other rooms is now being done.

We can all, as an Association, take pride and have great satisfaction in this achievement. Through the generosity of many members, and some who are not members, money has been available to accomplish what has been done to date. More money is now needed to complete the work that is still to be done.

I can think of no more appropriate way to celebrate our 40th Anniversary than to have a 40th Anniversary Campaign to raise the money needed to finish the Museum and establish it on a firm financial footing. Mr. Albert Thomas has agreed to be Chairman of the 40th Anniversary Fund Drive, and you will be hearing more about the Committee's plans shortly. All contributions to the Association and Museum are tax deductible as we have had a ruling to this effect from the Federal Income Tax Department.

We, in 1962, are thus making Middleboro history just as surely as did all the early settlers three hundred years ago. Let us all join together in making our 40th Anniversary year noteworthy for the completion of a community project that will be worthy of our historic heritage.

Harold A. Hall

OUR TOWN HALLS

When was Middleboro's first Town House built? Weston's History of the Town of Middleboro records that it was completed and accepted January 2, 1798. The manuscript ledgers in Waldo Thomas' office testify that an article in the warrant for 1788 started the battle of "by whom, where and how much." A motion was finally passed after eight long years to raise one thousand dollars for the erection of a town house by a vote of 146 to 106 March 21, 1796. Up to this time town meetings had been held at the Easterly Precinct Meeting House. Levi Tinkham wrote on the margin of his almanack for 1796, "Town House Raised Aug. 23 — Began to build Chimney Sept. 1." The "votables" met at the new Town House November 7, 1796. Fletcher Clark suggests that possibly the "votables" didn't accept it until 1798, in which case Mr. Weston is right technically and legally. However, contemporary manuscript always has a very definite flavor. Maybe they didn't accept it but they liked it well enough to use it from November 1796 on! (Middleborough Antiquarian Vol. 1, No. 4.)

The present town hall was completed and dedicated in December, 1873. Negotiations began in the early part of 1872, and obviously there was less opposition to the expenditure of $48,984.36 than there had been to raise a thousand in 1788. The architect, Solomon K. Eaton of Mattapoisett, died before the building was completed; and Horatio Barrows, chairman of the committee, finished the task. I wonder what would happen if our association offered an article at the next town meeting to see if the "votables" would raise money to build an exact replica of this **once** thousand dollar town house? Actually progress will next demand demolition of our 1873 hall and propose a new 20th century $200,000 modern structure so that we can "keep up with the Joneses" from Maine to Texas. I suppose that's life — some of us must make history while others record it. If there were no changes history would be very dull indeed. On the other hand, it's about time these two teams were a little more evenly matched. Who would want to watch a football game with twenty players on one team and only two on the other? **IF** we must have a new town hall, let's wait until 1996, call it an anniversary, preserve the one we have, and place this new thing out on route 25!

NOSTRUMS OF THE NINETIES

Pitchmen, who cash in on our poignant desire to stay the heavy hand of time by offering all kinds of ways to vigor and beauty, have been amongst us for a long time. While we tend to think the present times abound with their tempting wares, even cursory glance through back issues of The Middleboro Gazette proves the fallacy of supposing that the nostrums of the otherwise decorous Nineties were not as blatant and abundant as they are now.

There is no doubt that man's vanity is hardest hit when the thick locks of his youth begin to thin and fall out. No field has been more lucrative than this for the purveyors of various claims that all need not be lost.

Here, for example, is Ayer's Hair Vigor, advertised in The Gazette in 1889. Its magic restorative powers are testified to through letters from jubilant users, though we notice with a cynical eye that none are located nearby so that we might have a first hand look at the magic wrought by Ayer's Hair Vigor. One letter is from Louisiana, one from Indiana, and the other from Texas. It is significant to our doubts that there are no testimonials from Rock Village or North Middleboro.

At any rate, Mrs. P. H. Davidson, Alexandria, Louisiana, testified, "To restore the original color of my hair, which had turned prematurely gray, I used Ayer's Hair Vigor with entire success. I cheerfully testify to the efficiency of this preparation."

And here is one from a clergyman who, being such, helps put our cynicism to rout.

The Rev. S. S. Simms' hair was falling out and what was left had turned gray. "I was induced to try Ayer's Hair Vigor, and in a few weeks the disease in my scalp disappeared and my hair resumed its natural color." And who's to doubt the integrity of the Rev.? How could one possibly suspect the taint of payola? Today, baseball players and society gals readily lend their names to products, so there is nothing new to this pitch.

And here is Sulphur Bitters. It is tantalizing reading, for the product, despite its great cure-all powers, probably is off the market today. Advertised as "The Great German Remedy," Sulphur Bitters would cure bilious spells, that tired and all gone feeling, rheumatism, and liver complaints. It would build you up and make you strong and healthy and if you worked indoors as a clerk or mill hand, would prevent your being weak and sickly. So it was claimed, and there was a $1,000 reward for any case where Sulphur Bitters did not assist or cure—so there!

Also available: Johnson's Anodyne Liniment—for external and internal use—cures diphtheria, croup, asthma, bronchitis, neuralgia, pneumonia, bleeding at the lungs, hoarseness, and a host of other major and minor afflictions. And you think some of the claims today are wild? We feel that the government sticks its nose into too many things, but we might be thankful for the Federal watchdogs that attempt to keep such advertising somewhere in the realm of reality.

Here's one that caters to the relief of our most common complaints, for which there exists today a host of powders. pills and soothing syrups. In 1889, if you suffered distress after eating, sick headache, heartburn, or sour stomach, Hood's Sarsaparilla (100 doses for a dollar) would take you out of the valley of fatigue and distress to the sunny heights of well being.

Yet, in fairness, we must note at least one modest ad which made no claim other than being "The Best Spring Tonic"; Tarrant's Seltzer Aperient.

In these 1960's we are privileged (?) to see on television a demonstration in which a tiny jet of unimpeded air from a person's nostril makes a spot of vapor on a mirror under the nose, proof positive that the nostrum advertised has cleared the nasal passage.

Back in the '90s, unblessed by these visual aids to medical education, Ely's Cream Balm advertisement also employed the old adage that one picture is worth a thousand words. The pictured head of a man was subdivided into areas of catarrh, hay fever, colds, deafness, and headache and the top of the skull emblazoned with the product name. Price, 50c.

To these great curatives add Humor Syrup and Indian Specific, Mortinor's Blood Purifier, Mrs. Kidder's Cordial (no kidding!), South American Pile Remedy, Jewett's Health Restoring Bitters and Pulmonary Elixir, Constitution Water, Buchan's Balsam of Life, Quero's Cod Liver Oil Jelly, Pine Tree Tar Ointment, and Seaweed Tonic. There are many others—enough to make an African witch doctor look like a rank amateur and modern hucksters pale into insignificance.

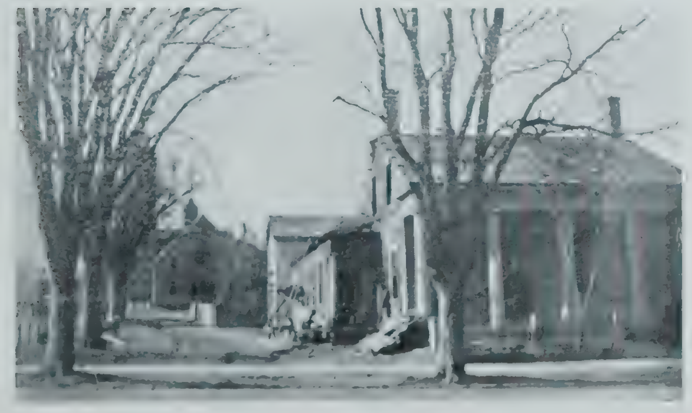
These were a few of the nostrums of the Nineties, an historical footnote to mankind's perpetual pursuit of health and happiness.

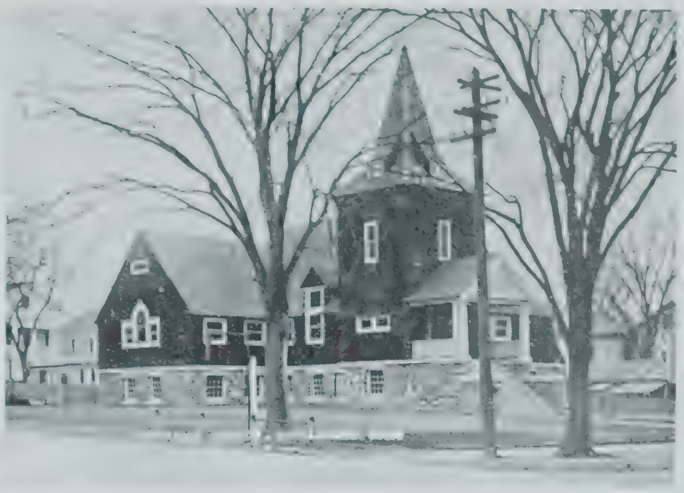
Finally, an addition to our notes on thinning, falling, and gray hair. In a 1925 Gazette, just to prove that there's one born every minute, a report of a local man who responded to this ad—"Save Your Hair!—Send one dollar." So he sent the dollar hopefully and what he got was a small cardboard box and these instructions—"When your hair falls out, put it in this box and SAVE IT!"

Clint Clark

SOUTH MAIN STREET — BEFORE AND AFTER

The Beckie Parker house was located on the corner of South Main Street and Town House Avenue (now Nickerson Avenue). Later it was moved to North Middleborough and the Unitarian church was moved to this location from Pearl Street. By the time this second picture was taken, Town House Avenue had been moved more to the left; it originally led straight to the Baptist church.

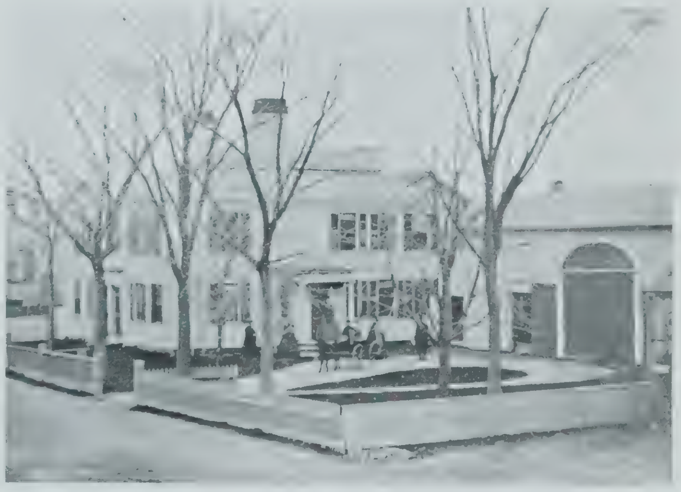


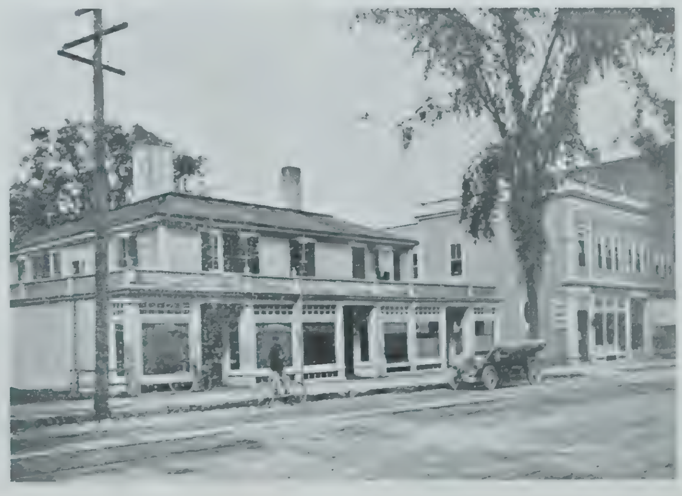


The Thatcher homestead, located to the right of the Parker place, has been converted into a block of stores and apartments. The trees, stables, and circular drive are long gone. This was once the gracious home of Allan C. Thatcher, great-great-grandfather of the present head of H. L. Thatcher and Co.

The original tract of land was bounded by South Main Street, Town House Avenue, the Baptist church property, and the Academy. It went west and included a block of buildings on Center Street.

Later generations of Thatchers: Levi, Henry L., Allan R., and Ronald, who operates the printing business on the same property on Thatcher's Row.





CALIFORNIA MILLS

Location—Town of Plympton near the Middleborough town line on Prospect Street.

The mill has a history that dates back to 1849. It was once a grist mill and sawmill, and it was owned by Peter Washburn and Gustavus Parker. Peter Washburn was grandfather to the present Charles P. Washburn, Sr.

During the gold rush in California in 1849, the name "California Mills" originated. The reason for the name is this: A canal was dug between the upper and lower ponds to increase the water supply for the water wheel. A crew of men was hired to do the work. They were of Irish descent from Boston. They boarded in Plympton and walked to work every morning with picks and shovels as the gold miners did in California.

This mill burned in 1872. Rumor has it that one of the former employees started the fire.

The mill was rebuilt. At this time the mill changed ownership under James Ellis of Plympton and later his son Henry Ellis.

In 1883 Asaph Foster Washburn of East Middleborough bought a half interest in the mill. They operated it until 1892. Mill operation consisted of a long mill and a box-board mill. Lumber was used in making cranberry boxes. Also, boards were carted over the road by horse and wagon to the Bosworth Box Mill in Halifax to be made into shoe boxes.

The California Mill changed hands again on January 1, 1892. Edwin Everett Soule, son-in-law to Asaph Washburn bought H. K. Ellis's share. Both were residents of East Middleborough. The mill was then operated under the name of Washburn and Soule.

This mill continued to operate under water power. As business increased, a 50 horsepower steam engine was installed. Much of the waste products, slabs, shavings, and sawdust were used for fuel.

More machinery was added at this time. Box shooks were then made and carted to Mount Carmel depot in East Middleborough for shipment to Malden. Later on shooks were sold to Clark and Cole Mill in Middleborough. Cranberry picking crates were made and also the third barrel cranberry shipping box, also the half barrel box.

As the cranberry industry increased, there was a call for barrels. This required more machinery and more room. The mill was enlarged and a cooper shop was built. A long shed was erected for storing and seasoning staves. The cedar for barrels was cut in the nearby cedar swamps and sawed into staves during the winter months. Barrel heads were made of native pine and sawed in the mill. Hoops were made from elm, purchased from the West, and shipped by the carload. The business was good for quite a few years. When the quarter barrel box cam into use, the barrel was a thing of the past.

The market for cranberry boxes and shooks increased. A long building was built facing the road. Nailing machines, a printing press, and two 50 horsepower electric motors were installed. After a few years, another change came. The half barre was not in demand. The quarter barrel was used exclusively for shipping. These boxes were shipped to local bogs, Nantucket, and also to Greene, Rhode Island.

In 1935 Asaph Foster Washburn passed away. The business was then continued by his son, Chester H. Washburn and Edwin E. Soule. The mill continued to operate in the manufacture of cranberry boxes until the spring of 1941.

In May, 1941, a bolt of lightning struck the plant and it was destroyed by fire. As the cranberry box business was decreasing due to the changing times, the California Mill was never rebuilt.

Since then, other mills have either burned or have ceased to operate due to the change in material used and the type of cartons that have replaced the wooden box.

Interesting Events

After a severe rain, the wooden dam at the upper pond was washed away uprooting trees and covering the cranberry bog wit sawdust more than a foot deep, then was washed down fro the bottom of the pond. Later on a cement dam was installed, which was still standing in the year 1961.

The mill was more fortunate in the days of the old dinner pail which held the coffee in the bottom. When the roof caugh fire from the smoke stack, there was no fire protection excep water pails and dinner pails that held the coffee. A line of men was formed with the pails, lined from the pond to the roof. After a hard fight the fire was subdued. The dinner pail was a big help.

During the war, maneuvers were carried on in the vicinity of Soule Street and Cedar Street between the two "armies." A very bad spell of rainy weather occurred during this time. Men coming to work in the morning found the millyard and the boardyard covered with tents and guns and men between the board piles. The soldiers camped, using boards as roofs to keep them dry.

Most logs were unloaded in front of the door to the log platform. Erastus Shaw drove into the yard with a load of logs. In turning the load around to back up to the platform, the horse, wagon, and load backed into the water. After some work the horse and load were pulled onto dry land.

Chester Washburn

Happy Recollections of the Old Colony Railroad

You would rarely associate a flower show with our railroad station, yet in the years before and after 1890, an extensive display of flowering plants was enjoyed by the patrons of the railroad. The Old Colony was famous for beautifying their grounds around the depots. The yard in Middleboro included much of the lot now occupied by the Armory.

George Parker, who owned a greenhouse in Halifax, had the contract to set out plants in different floral designs in a large area at each station. He hired a crew of men, who rode the trains each day. They set out the geraniums, candytuft, lilies, argeratum, pansies, or snow-on-the-mountain, in the pattern drawn by the landscape gardener. The yards varied in the different towns according to the size and shape of the gardens. In dry weather the crew had to water the plants or replace them if they withered. In the fall all plants were removed, and the soil leveled for the winter.

There were no autos to be parked. Riders walked to the station, unless they lived some distance away, and came by carriage. Stations were only a few miles apart in those days and accommodated everyone. Scholars, teachers, workmen, and shoppers gathered for a daily chat as they waited for the whistle and bell of the approaching locomotive. A favorite pastime was watching for the men who were always a little late and had to run for the train.

The Middleboro Station was a beehive of activity from early morning until midnight, because this was a junction of many roads. Trains came from the Cape and started for Boston almost every hour. Some were "accommodation trains" and stopped at every pair of bars, such as Flagg Street, where a man who was employed by the Old Colony stood with a flag in his hand to stop the train if someone wanted to get on. If anyone on the train wanted to get off there, the conductor pulled the cord and signalled the engineer to stop.

Trains came from Providence and departed for Plymouth. The Fall River trains connected with the New York steamer and brought cars loaded with baggage and crowded with families from New York. They changed trains here for the Cape, or Plymouth, where they spent their summers in their cottages near the shore. The men folk would come for Sundays. No Saturdays off, in those days and no one ever heard of a Friday-through-Sunday "week-end." About three dozen huge baggage trucks would be loaded with trunks and wheeled by hand to other tracks and put on different baggage cars. Hundreds of travelers relied on the Baggage Master to transfer their boxes and baby carriages safely.

Between trains these people all had a chance to look over the flower beds and note the different plants used for background, fillers, and edges. They could copy the ideas in their own gardens. The gardens were planned to provide blossoms all summer. Calendula, cosmos, salvia, cannas, and flowering shrubs were showy in the fall.

The morning crowd always cast an eye across the tracks to Sears Lumber Co. to find out what the weather would be. The old mill had a cupola on top where the flags were displayed: A square white flag for clear weather, a square dark blue flag for rain, and a square dark blue flag with a white square in the center for snow. There was a white triangular flag for temperature. If it was above the other flags, the weather would be warmer. When it was below the flags, the weather would be colder. There were no radio or television broadcasts in those days, so it was a must to observe the weather flags. It was exciting fun to sit on the old mill and watch the trains switch from one track to another.

The freight house was a busy place that was packed with all sorts of provisions and merchandise. Many men sorted the local deliveries from those to be transferred to other trains. The round house, where the locomotives were reversed on a turn table by a mechanical device, was a fascinating place. The "steel horses" had to be cleaned, polished, and inspected regularly. A tall water tank was ready to fill the boilers while people climbed aboard the cars and talked with the conductors. An ice box held a supply of the cold cubes to replenish the dining cars.

Single-truck coal cars used to swing noisily around the bend at Bulls Eye headed for the various coal yards. This was before the days of automatic couplings. Carloads of lumber were switched to the Sears lumber yard private track. Shoes and cranberries were shipped away from here, too. There was never a quiet moment in the freight yard day or night as the "switcher" was shunting cars around and the theatre train rolled in after midnight.

There was one day a year when little attention was paid to the flower gardens, and that was the day the circus came to town. Tremendous activity centered around the siding where circus cars were unloaded. Cages of animals were drawn to Depot Grove and exhibited in a huge tent erected about sunrise time. Many strange noises accompanied the swift, well-organized work, and the excitement attracted youngsters from miles around, who crawled out of bed and scrambled to the tracks before breakfast. (Remember?) By loading time at night after the Big Show, eyes were too sleepy to follow the procession from the tent back to the siding, although it was an exciting day, long to be remembered.

Another activity in Depot Grove that was interesting to a different group of people, was the Sunday afternoon Gospel hymn service. There was an organ on a platform in the shade of the lovely large trees. Benches were well filled with good singers. A minister conducted a short session of prayer and a message, which comprised the program. It was a social event, too, and a great attraction for children who wanted something to do on Sunday afternoons. They usually attended with their grandmothers.

Believe me, the railroad station and vicinity were the back bone of our town and industries. The restaurant and magazine stand in the depot were very popular and well patronized by trainmen and travelers. The latest papers and magazines were on sale there.

When the passenger trains were discontinued, it was a sad day for every one. Seventy-five families had to move away. The freight house was sold. Some tracks were removed. There is no more switching of cars. The trains from New York swing around the Curve at Bulls Eye and do not come near the station. Only a freight train pulls through the yard sometimes in the night, and the whistle and melodious bell of the locomotive are seldom heard. On May first of this year even the restaurant was closed. Now the Middleboro station is a deserted building. The beautiful flower gardens, which one were such bright spots in many lives and the pride of the Old Colony railroad are now gone forever.

Ernest and Rose Pratt

Three Blacksmith Shops, A Brick Yard and Shoemakers' Shops in Soule Neighborhood

As a child I was briefed many times by my grandfather, Orlando Soule, on certain facts of historic interest regarding this section of the Town, some of which are already recorded in Weston's History of Middleboro. However, I remember a few additional facts which, I believe, would be of historic interest and which are not recorded in history as far as I know.

The Soule neighborhood, located in East Middleboro, was in the early days made up of families of that name. I have heard it said that, as late as the year 1850, every family on Cedar Street except one, and every family on Soule Street except one, was named Soule.

George Soule, the Mayflower Pilgrim, was one of the signers of the 26 Men's Purchase and had large landholdings in Middleboro on the shores of the Winnetuxet River—hence the settlement of Soules in this area.

At one time there were three blacksmith shops in this area, a brick yard, and two to six shoemakers' stalls in the several homes. In my grandfather's home there were six benches. One of the blacksmith shops was located at the intersection of Winter and Cedar Streets, at the northeast corner on property now owned by Harold Ramsden. I do not remember the facts about this shop, but my great-great grandfather, Isaac Soule, Jr., at one time owned this property.

Another shop was located on the James Soule property on the westerly side of Cedar Street. This property was sold by his heirs to my father, Charles H. Soule, in the year 1899. The blacksmith shop was moved at that time across the highway east about one-quarter mile off Cedar Street. Parts of this blacksmith shop may still be in evidence, but the building is no more. It was used at one time for a grain building on an 8-acre piece of land which my father cleared to start his business, the raising of Pekin ducks for market, on a large farm known as Valley Farm. I want to write of this sometime, as the business is now a matter of history and was a most successful venture in the early 1900's.

The third blacksmith shop was also located on Cedar Street on the westerly side at the intersection of Soule and Cedar Streets on property now owned by Wiksten Brothers. This shop was moved after the Civil War to a location on Station Street near what was then Everett Square, now John Glass, Jr., Square. The old Thomas stable stood right across the street from the shop at that time. The business was known as Bailey and Soule—Blacksmiths and Carriage Builders. From six to eight blacksmiths were employed there. Thomas Soule and Luther Bailey were the owners. This blacksmith shop was still in operation in the early 1900's, has since been demolished, and at present the All-Wright Diner is very near the same spot on which the shop was located.

Getting back again to the early 1800's, a brickyard was also located off Cedar Street, about one-quarter mile across the street west of the large colonial brick house now standing. This house is located north a short distance below the intersection of Cedar and Winter Streets. My great grandfather, Jonathan Soule, manufactured brick at this brickyard, and in 1837 built the brick house. This house is of unusual structure in that four thicknesses of brick were used on the first story, and three thicknesses were used on the second story. There were four fireplaces on the first floor, two on the second floor, and a large unfinished attic where there could have been another fireplace. There were five large rooms downstairs with wide wainscotting in three of the rooms, and of course, the old pine boards used for flooring. There was a large hall and beautiful old staircase. There were three finished rooms upstairs. At the time this house was built it was the only house for some distance which had a cellar under the whole building. An ell, where a kitchen, woodshed and shoemaker's shop were located, completed the house as I remember it. I believe the ell was added at some later date than 1837. Here my great grandfather also conducted a shoemaker's shop, employing from two to six men. He was a member of the militia that trained on Middleboro Green, and we have the clarinet he played at these musters.

In 1844 he was called to Yarmouthport to start a brickyard there, working for a Mr. Otis. Letters written home at that time tell of employing help at ".10 an hour—they to find their own board and lodging," while he as co-manager received ".10 an hour with room and lodging found."

Remains of the old brickyard on Cedar Street are still in evidence if one can visit the spot. Many of the houses built around that time contain brick made in this brickyard.

The oldest Soule homestead standing when I was a child was located one-quarter mile off Cedar Street to the east, and opposite the intersection of Cedar and Winter Streets on the right of way to the Winnetuxet River. This was an old Cape Cod style home built in the early 1700's after the first Soule home burned. This house also burned in the early 1900's, having caught fire through children's playing with matches.

At some later date I will write more of later history in this neighborhood. A schoolhouse was located here at one time. It was known as the Soule School. There were two such buildings, the latter being built around 1902 or 1903 which is still standing on the Winter Street location, but it is now owned by a Sporting Club.

Mrs. Albert Soule, Sr.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF PROFESSOR WILLIAM H. CROGMAN, A.M.

(Taken from TALKS FOR THE TIMES by Edward L. Parks, D.D.)

William H. Crogman was born on the island of St. Martin's on May 5, 1841. In 1855 he went to sea on a vessel on which Mr. Benjamin L. Boomer was mate. Mr. Boomer took a deep interest in him at once and afterwards took him to his home in Massachusetts. Mr. Boomer's brothers were sea captains. The Crogman boy followed the sea with this family for eleven years. He visited many lands, and because he was observant and thoughtful, he obtained a wide knowledge of various nationalities and parts of the world. His visits included England, various points on the continent of Europe, Calcutta, and Bombay in India, and various ports in South America.

In 1866, at the suggestion of Mr. Boomer that an academic education would make him more useful, Crogman, then at the ge of twenty five, began to earn means to attend an academy. He worked and saved money until in 1868 he entered Peirce Academy in Middleborough, Massachusetts. He studied there two years taking an English course with French and bookkeeping. Professor J. W. P. Jenks of Brown University, who was then principal of the academy said of Mr. Crogman: "During the twenty-nine years that I was principal of Peirce Academy in Middleborough, Massachusetts, from 1842 to 1871, I never made any distinction of nationality, race, or color in receiving pupils, and, but in one instance, and that not while Professor Crogman was there, was any race prejudice shown among my pupils, though till the war there was not one year that the children of slaveholders were not members of the school, and quite frequently there were Negroes at the same time. However, a lodging room was found with difficulty, and he was obliged to board himself under great disadvantages. Beginning with me in the elementary English branches, I may safely say, in them all, he accomplished in one quarter as much as the average student did in two, mastering almost intuitively, and with equal facility, both mathematical and linguistical principles. I formed him into a class of one, lest he should be hindered by the dullness of others. In the third quarter he commenced French, and, as I have often said, surpassed every one of the hundreds of students in both rapidity of advancement and accuracy of scholarship."

After completing this academic course in the fall of 1870, Crogman started for the south to give his life to the Christian education and elevation of his race. [He was a Negro.]

Crogman became a professor at Clark University in Atlanta, Georgia. During his lifetime he was rated among the first four, if not at the very head, of the colored race.

Contributed by Laurist W. Reynolds
Old Bridgewater Historical Society

BENJAMIN LORING BOOMER

Benjamin Loring Boomer was born in Fall River, Massachusetts, in 1826. At an early age he enlisted in the United States Engineer Corps of which he was a member until his death. His company was sent to West Point for preparation for active service in the Mexican War where he became associated with Robert E. Lee, G. B. McClellan, and P. G. T. Beauregard who afterward became famous Confederate leaders. He earned a certificate of merit and honorable mention for bravery and meritorious conduct at Cherubusco, August 20, 1847.

After the war Mr. Boomer followed the sea for several years and on one of his trips to the West Indies he brought back a young colored lad, whom he educated and who became a noted teacher and a power among his people in the South—William H. Crogman.

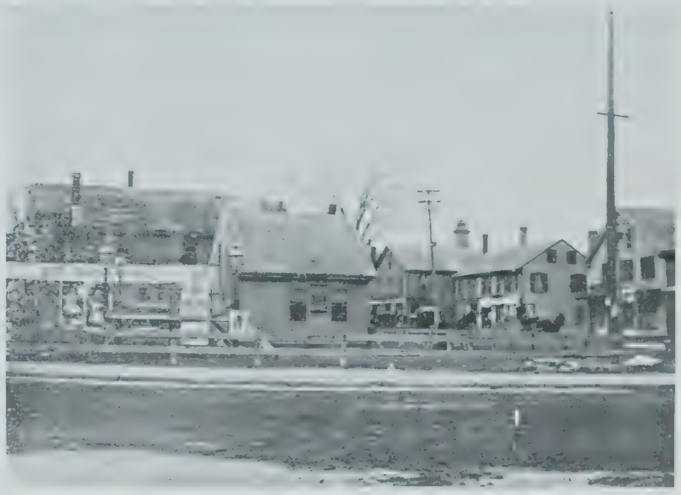
About forty years before his death, Boomer came to Middleborough and soon afterward married Rebecca C., daughter of Elisha Waterman and followed the trade of a painter. He removed to Campello about 1875.

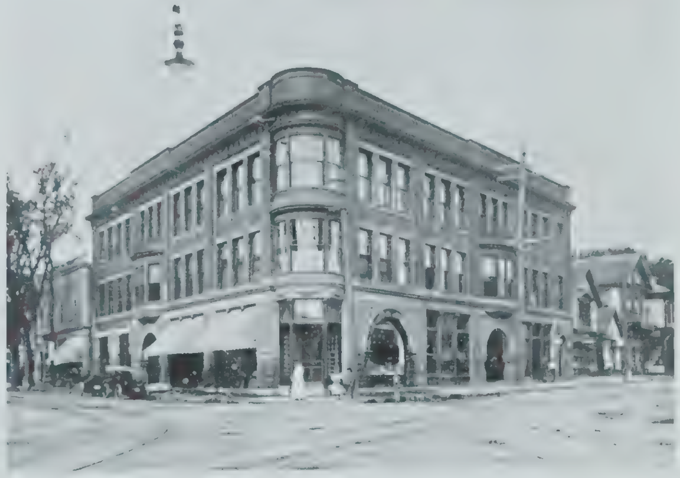
Benjamin Loring Boomer died in 1895 and was buried at Nemasket Hill.

Laurist W. Reynolds

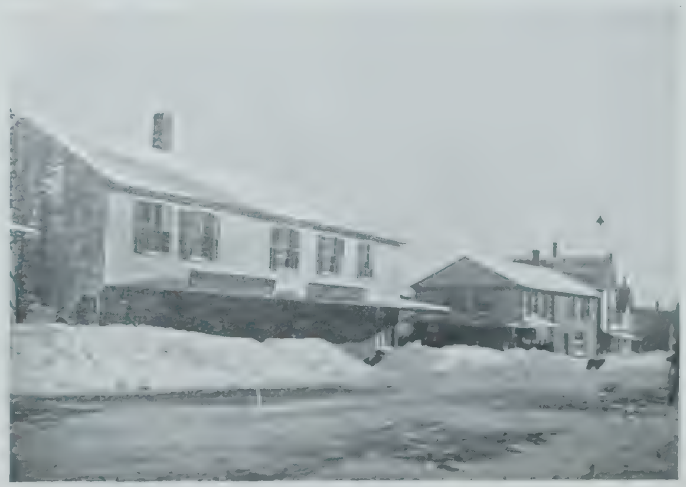
CENTER OF TOWN — BEFORE AND AFTER

The bank block on the corner of South Main and Center Streets was the site of the town pump, and later a band stand was built on the lot for public concerts. The long sign in the picture is an advertisement for the American Theater. The square building on the lot once served as the office of the town clerk, treasurer and collector. Burglars once blew open the safe and caused much excitement in town. Later the building was used by a dealer of wood and coal. Before the Bank Building was erected in 1895, the square building was moved to Lakeville.





Before the Peirce Building was built in 1900 on the corner of North Main and Center Streets, Matthew H. Cushing operated a grocery store there in an old building for thirty-seven years.



WILLIAM R. PEIRCE

The familiar town clock atop the Central Baptist church was a gift of a member of Middleboro's famous Peirce family, although it was not commonly known until after the donor's death. An abstract of the address given by the Rev. Millard Johnson at a funeral service on February 4, 1896, reveals William Rounseville Peirce as the donor.

William R. Peirce was born in 1821, the son of Peter H. and Nabby (Sproat) Peirce, and was educated at the Peirce Academy and graduated from Brown University in 1843. According to Weston's Middleboro History, "William superintended the large farm and real estate interest and gave his attention largely to literary pursuits." He was the second president of the Middleboro public library, serving from 1875 to 1895. He remained a bachelor.

It was William's uncle, Major Levi Peirce, who was instrumental in the formation of the Baptist church in Middleboro and in the foundation of the Peirce Academy," which was named for him, as it was largely through his benefaction that the academy and the Central Baptist church were built." (Weston's History) William's brother, Thomas S., who outlived the large family of Peirce children and inherited their wealth, is remembered for his philanthropic gifts to the town and library.

To get back to William, he was a charitable person, although his generosity went unknown until after his death. The reason for this is disclosed in the abstract, "no worthy cause went from him empty handed. But he cautioned the recipient not to publish it."

The abstract, yellowed with years, is the property of Mr. and Mrs. G. Ward Stetson (to whom this writer is indebted for reference material). It contains not only the address given at Mr. Peirce's funeral, just six years after the dedication of the present Central Baptist church, but a picture of him also.

A brief excerpt from the booklet, "While not a member, yet for many years he was a regular attendant upon the services of the Central Baptist church and was a member of the Society and manifested an active interest in its welfare as was evinced by the gift by himself and family of a fine town clock and sweet toned bell for the tower of the new church dedicated January 22, 1890, together with modern appointments."

Claire Rockwood

THE LITTLE OLD HOUSE

In the heart of the woods stood a little old house—
And it held quite an int'rest for me
For although I know there was no one inside
Right there by the door hung a key.
I had peeked through the windows a good many times
But I never had dared to explore
'Til the day curiosity conquered my fear
And put the big key in the door.
I admit I was frightened, and now looking back
It does seem a strange thing to do
But my wonder was stronger than good sense that day
So I wandered within for a view.
Though the house was the oldest that I'd ever seen
I knew it had known loving care
And each thing inside seemed built for the room
As though it had always been there.
Though I felt like a culprit for what I had done,
I gingerly peered all around
And I thrilled with excitement and wondering awe
At each age-old thing that I found.
There were little Dutch-ovens and ceilings with beams
And wide wooden boards neath my feet,
And though there was dust you could cut with a knife
You could tell that the rooms were left neat.
There was one room with little stuffed birds beneath glass—
'Twas obvious they were a treasure—
And I tried to imagine how some outdoor man
Had stuffed them for some maiden's pleasure.
Then the room with the well made my heart jump with joy
For though 'twas the first one I'd seen
I felt I had lowered that bucket before—
And I wondered what such thoughts could mean.
In fact as I roamed through the little old house
The sense of my guilt passed away,
For it seemed I had been there at some time before
I thought I heard voices say, "Stay."
And I had the strange feeling that all this was planned—
It was meant I should see all its charms
And decipher the fairy-tales inside its walls
And feel so secure in its arms.
And I wonder sometimes when I think of that day
If perhaps I was born once before
And I lived in the house with the mem'ries inside
And the old rusty key by the door.

Virginia Gibbons

MAY 23

WHAT HAPPENS THEN?

Sometimes it is interesting to take the present day of the month and look back into history and learn what happened on that day. Take May 23 and work back 97 years to May 23, 1865. It was perhaps the day of all days best remembered by many of the "Boys in Blue" from Middleborough.

At least three Massachusetts Regiments, the 32nd, 40th and 58th, were on hand that day for the great event. They had all seen long months of active service. Most of them had spent the winter in the muddy trenches in front of Richmond or Petersburg. After that they had been through the swift campaign that ended Palm Sunday morning at Appomattox Court House.

Then for a day or two discipline was relaxed or disappeared. The men of the North visited the camps of the Army of Northern Virginia and fraternalized with their former enemies. They marched leisurely back through the warm spring weather across Virginia to Washington. The War was over, peace had come, Lincoln had been murdered, Johnson was President; soon they would be discharged and go home. But the great event of May 23 was still before them. On that day as a part of the Army of the Potomac they would parade in the Grand Review.

Thousands and thousands of troops had been brought to Washington for the great event. Their camps almost surrounded the city. Early on the morning of May 23 the various divisions assembled and marched into the city, forming up on the streets that lead into Pennsylvania Avenue.

Then came the great moment. The signal to march was given by five rolls of the drums and the column swung into the Avenue. They marched in company front at "Shoulder Arms" in what seemed an endless column.

The Army of the Potomac had always been very proud of its appearance and the condition of all its equipment. The reports tell how well they were turned out that day. Many had new uniforms, all shoes were polished and so were the brass trimmings on their accoutrements, their rifles were burnished so that they shone. Most of the men had white gloves. I am sure that my old friend, Capt. James W. Bryant of the 40th Regiment, wore his shoulder sash of which he was justifiedly proud. He and the other officers all carried swords.

There were many bands with many different uniforms. The leaders wore high bearskin "shakos." Many of the regiments were small, due to losses, so that often the bands were close together. The Color Bearers proudly carried their national and regimental flags, decorated with the names of the many battles they had fought in. One eye witness described the men's faces as having "a glory look."

Something was happening that they had all prayed for but which many of them never expected to live to see. This was the grand finale, a most impressive occasion, always to be remembered.

As each Company passed the reviewing stand they executed "Eyes Right" and for a brief moment every man in the Army of the Potomac saw the leaders and generals. Most of the men had never seen General Grant, but he was there and he saluted their flags as they passed. So was General Meade and President Johnson and General Sherman of the famed March through Georgia. As each Division passed, its commanding general joined the group of reviewing officers so that every man saw his own commanding general.

The Middleborough men of three Massachusetts regiments passed in review on that May 23 in the most spectacular parade our nation has ever witnessed.

Fletcher Clark

FROM AN OLD SCRAPBOOK

Our River

I have never seen the Hudson
With its palisades of stone.
I have never seen the Ganges
Tiber or the Rhone.
But one quiet little river
Flows by us day by day
And murmurs gentle music
While we work or while we play.
Near its banks we love to wander
When the fresh spring breezes blow
For 'tis there the fragrant mayflower
And the modest violet grow.
Then as spring gives place to summer
Fair the scene at close of day
As on lofty "Walks of Oliver"
Lovers stroll and children play.
On its waters once the Indian
In his light canoe was seen
Now the steamer "Assawampsett"
Floats between its banks of green.
In place of savage war-hoop
The rower's merry song
Awake the woodland echoes
As we gayly glide along.
All too soon we reach the lakeside
See its waves of sparkling blue
'Tis a fair and charming picture
But our thoughts turn back to you.
Fair Nemasket! Gentle river
If in distant lands I roam
In my dreams thy voice shall call me
Back to childhood's happy home.

O.

(This description of Middleborough
was also taken from the scrapbook.)

Middleborough
Where it is and what it is.

From time to time the citizen of Middleborough is questioned in regard to his town, its advantages, its location, population, and a hundred other questions that naturally arise in speaking of a town which the questioner knows nothing at all about. With a view to answering in a general way some of these questions, we have prepared this short article and though it may contain nothing new to the local reader, it will be found of interest to those that know nothing about the place.

Thirty-four miles out, on the Old Colony railroad, and about an hour distance from Boston, is situated the Town of Middleborough of which we write. The trains from the city are frequent, and sixteen trains per day run in and out of the depot to Boston, while it is the junction of the Cape Cod branch of the Old Colony, the accommodation to Fall River which connects with the New York boats, and the Taunton Branch which connects direct with Providence. An hour and ten minutes takes one to Boston, thirty-five minutes to Brockton, forty to Fall River and the palace steamers to the great metropolis, thirty to Taunton and a few hours for Providence. Trains run in and out from 6 o'clock A.M. to 6 P.M. and every accommodation is afforded by the Old Colony. The town is situated in the western part of Plymouth County and is bounded by Halifax, Plympton, and Carver on the southeast—Rochester on the south. Lakeville on the west and southwest—Raynham also on the west and Bridgewater on the northwest. The number of inhabitants is 5,300 and constantly increasing. There are about 1,000 dwellings—500 farms which cover an area of 34,000 square acres and in woodland there are 20,000 acres, furnishing large quantities of lumber, shingles, box boards, staves, etc. There are a number of mills for the working of lumber in its various forms. While agriculture is an important feature, it is by no means the business of the town, as aside from this, its industries are varied and extensive. The Star Woolen Mills, employing a large number of hands, is noted for its fine cassimeres and broadcloths; The Bay State Straw Works manufactures straw goods that are known the world over. Leonard & Barrows shoe manufactory is an important establishment, where ladies' shoes are turned out in large numbers, and C. D. Kingman also has a large factory for the manufacture of men's goods. P. Crimmens' establishment is also an important concern. There is a Union Needle works whose sewing machine needles are manufactured by the millions, and fingers are pricked in all languages by the goods manufactured here. A shovel manufactory is located on the picturesque Nemasket River, and Le Baron's iron foundry near the depot also aids in giving life and prosperity to the town. A jewel case factory is also one of the local industries and here are manufactured all the various styles of satin-lined jewelry boxes that can be found. The George Woods Organ Co. are about to erect a factory to employ two hundred hands and the town is prospering with a prospect of increasing rapidly in population and business interests.

The town is divided into several villages, the principal of which are the Center, North Middleborough in the northwest, Eddyville and Waterville in the northeast, the Green near the center, Rock and South Middleborough on the south.

The town has a savings bank in a flourishing condition. There is a commodious and well-kept hotel—the Nemasket House, an excellent public library, a lodge of Masons and Knights of Honor, a post of the Grand Army of the Republic, Sons of Temperance, Total Abstinence Society, Women's Christian Temperance Union, eight churches, a high school, twenty-two district schools and a Young Men's Christian Association.

(The following was also taken from an old scrap book. It is evidently written about the tower or steeple on the new town hall.)

Different persons who have clambered to the highest step in yonder steeple, even to the cap of the dome, the Monks Hood, have expatiated upon the beautiful view to be obtained. The outlook is extended, and the eye drinks in the landscape, pastoral and pictorial scene until one exclaims in wonderment and admiration. Says a lover of the beautiful, "If I had a friend who proposed to build a house I would take him into yonder dome and let him gaze upon the beauties of the surrounding scenery. As his eyes look out toward the west upon the cluster of well-kept houses, snug homes of a happy and prosperous people, he would, without doubt, exclaim, 'let my home be with these contented people whose homes bespeak culture, intelligence and contentment'; he turns to the north and says, 'say, here let me reside in peace, for this is a pleasant, abiding place'—again he turns to the east, and casting a longing look down the valley where flowing Nemasket winds, he longs to sit here by his own vine and fig tree, but again his attention is invoked towards the south, and he thinks this more beautiful than all, and his eyes wander over hill and dale entranced with the enrapturing scenery. The outlook is indeed, beautiful and well repays the wearying ascent."

(Some old Rock News items.)

One day last week our neighbor Mr. Eleazer Thomas with some of his friends from Pawtucket—after enlisting the acute angler of Mad Mare's Neck for a pilot, made a raid on Great Quitticus pond, and took about 200 fish averaging quite large and splendid looking ones.

We hope the people on the Neck will succeed in their enterprise, for why should they not have a chapel, or some public building on the Neck. They have plenty of fresh hay on one side to fill their barns with, and plenty of fish on the other side to fill their pans with, and lots of fruit in the season for it, and the fruits of the labors of the school teachers stand out so prominent that the moral principles call for a chapel.

Shirlie Clark

GRANDMOTHER'S MEDICINE

Years ago there were very few doctors. The medical knowledge of a doctor was small, and many people were afraid of quacks. Peddlers came through town selling cure-alls, medicine was sold in the general store, and doctors rolled their own pills, but in the end it was usually grandmother's medicine that did the curing.

Some grandmothers bought books that told of the uses of all roots and herbs; some grandmothers inherited their knowledge from older generations and would have been ashamed to refer to a book. There were many times when a shawled grandmother could be seen sallying forth, not to the pharmacy, but to the woods for snakeroot, skunk cabbage, and ladies' slipper, or to the fields for pleurisy root, bayberry, or bitter root. What is scorned today as weeds were once a vital source of medicine necessary for restoring good health.

It is interesting to know what some of the plants that we see everyday were used for. For example, the bayberry bush which is common in New England was one of the most valuable medicinal sources. The bark of the root was gathered in the spring or in the autumn, cleaned, and pounded. After the pounding when the bark was dry it was pulverized to the consistency of flour. Bayberry produces a somewhat pungent sensation on the glands, and so it was used for treating cankers of the mouth, throat, stomach, and bowels. Bayberry was also used as a toothpowder. As a medicine it was taken either a teaspoonful at a time or by mixing it with a little sugar and warm water to make a tea.

The leaves of the red raspberry were used for external applications to moisten poultices for burns. The root of the white pond lily was used for the same purpose. It is also said that the fresh juice of the pond lily root when mixed with lemon juice will remove freckles and blotches from the skin.

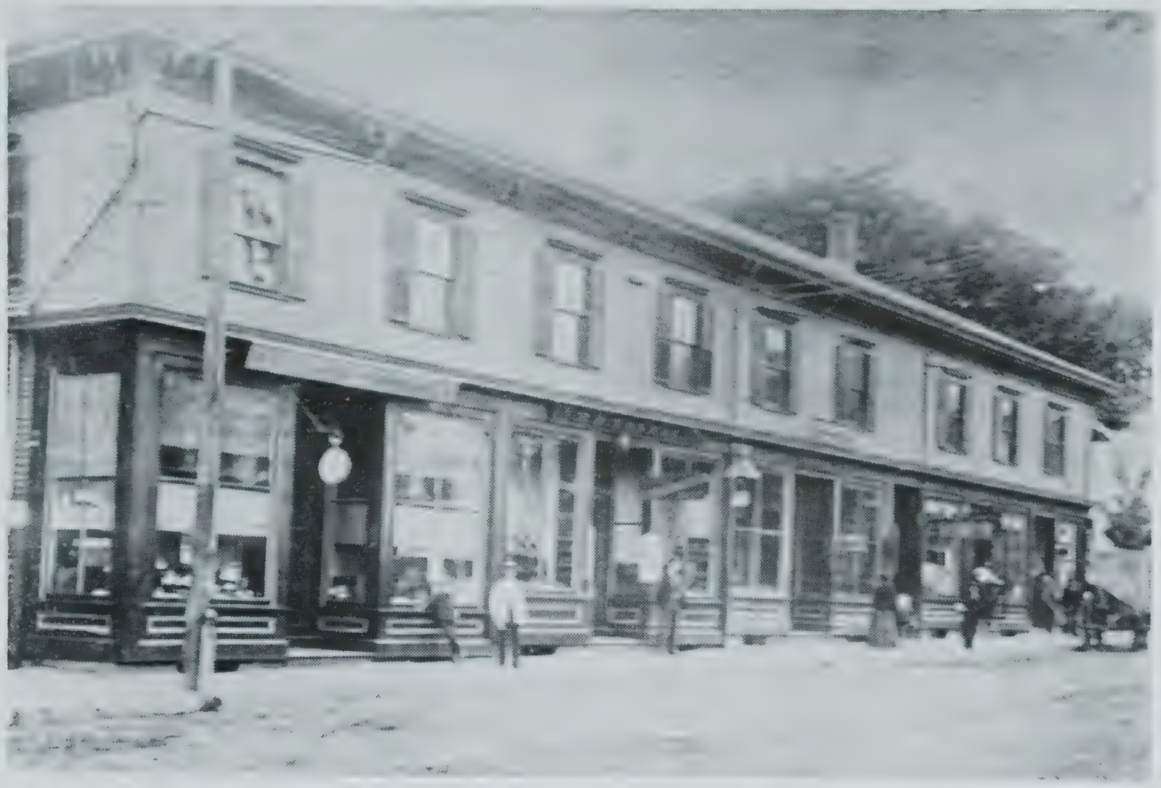
Perhaps many people wonder how skunk cabbage could possibly be used as a medicine. However, one third of a teaspoon full of the pulverized root is useful in asthma, coughs, and other trouble centering in the lungs. One book, A GUIDE TO HEALTH, published in 1845 cautions that an over-dose can produce temporary blindness. This proves that Grandmothers who could cure illnesses with wild roots and plants must have been experts. Some of their tonics and teas were complicated concoctions.

The roots of the ladies' slipper were used for all nervous diseases. We are told in the health guide, "It is far preferable to opium, having no baneful nor narcotic effects. It has produced sleep when opium has failed." An ounce of the powdered root was used to a pint of water.

For curing an earache one either steamed the side of the head or dropped the heart of a roasted onion into the ear. Another method was to rinse the ear with warm soapsuds. No matter what the ache or pain, there was a remedy that could x it up. What couldn't be taken from the herb garden came m the countryside. One Grandmother talked with another and some treatment was arrived at even for the more serious diseases such as cancer.

Today, many of the old remedies have long since been forgotten, but some of the simpler ones such as curing ringworm with kerosene are still used. Grandmothers a hundred years ago may not have contributed much to the medical profession, but they certainly did save many lives.

Richard S. Tripp



CENTER STREET — BEFORE

This picture of the Thatcher block was taken in 1885. Occupying the store on the south side of Center Street were: (from left to right) F. W. Hayden's Jewelry Store, D. B. Monroe's Boots & Shoes, Middleborough Post Office, a millinery and dressmaking shop, an unknown shop, and a grocery store. The building is now much changed.

WHEN IS HISTORY . . . . . .

I have been trying to rewrite the old saying about the door not being a door when it was ajar. As usual I thought myself into a corner, and now I've got to find a way to crawl out. Stupid? No, as a matter of fact—such slow thinking often creates a challenge, and without challenges we'd become vegetables.

History has got to be **then, now** and **to come.** Most of us are laboring under the delusion that it must be **then,** and that the events both great and small within our own memories just simply can't be history. Actually the minute John Glenn's capsule hit the Atlantic waters he was history—and, don't stop there —this very afternoon Scott Carpenter has become history. The man who shakes hands with Mister Moon **will be** history very shortly, and you can't ignore it today. When the new Middleboro Masonic Temple is built, it will make history, but unless we mend our ways the original photograph of the laying of the cornerstone may not be hanging on the walls of the Middleborough Historical Museums in the year 2062.

The compilation of four volumes of the Middleborough Antiquarian would have been a far easier task if our ancestors had recognized that history is **now.** Thanks to our historically interested members, we have been able to record what otherwise might have been entirely lost to coming generations. On the other hand I hate to think of the pictorial, printed and manuscript history that has gone down the proverbial drain—and mainly because people have spent their lives ooooing and aaahhhing at the accepted and honorably discharged events of our military, political and social past. Thanks to the Middleboro Gazette we are gaining ground and recording the immediate past as well as the present before it is too late. May its indexed files increase, and be preserved. When you get ready to throw out the family junk, whether a letter from Uncle Joe at the Gold Fields in 1852 or from a friend at the Cape who watched Scott Carpenter this morning, drop in at the museum on Jackson Street. History **IS NOW.**

The Stillwater Furnace

(Chewed from the Pages of a Manuscript Ledger
Recently Discovered)

1792 to 1799 — by The Museum Mouse

So one morning several years back I stretched, yawned, and flipped my tail, and decided to write a letter to the editor of the Gazette. The idea was simple. I live in a couple of old houses on Jackson street, and when the folks all moved out, eating became a problem. Then a gang of people started calling my diggings a museum which is a place where humans flock to see and talk about what they call history. Well, I figured I might suggest that they bring along cookies, crackers and cheese, and the like, and maybe I wouldn't have to roam so far to get a square meal. I must admit it has helped a bit but as P. T. Barnum used to say you gotta keep hollering at 'em all the time or they'll forget all about you. So now someone says the Antiquarian is coming out in style for the 40th anniversary and I gotta write something for it. What? Oh, any ole thing the man says. OK. So here goes.

Let's see, now where is that old calf ledger I was nibbling the other day—1792 to 1799 I think—dry as dust, and the cheapskates who made it only used calf on the spine, and even that isn't edible any longer. However, some durned bookworm got in and had a field day.

For my money a man is what he creates and produces, and not what he inherits. On the other hand history is all names and has to be—what's in a name?—History. So to be history you've got to make the news that is destined to become history, but you've got to be fast, and you've got to be right. Most of the men who created and produced the pages of ironware listed here were not quite fast enough to make enough money and fame to get in Mr. Weston's History, but I think they ought to be recorded on the smaller and less important pages of The Antiquarian.

Weston's History of the Town of Middleboro (page 339) tells us that South Middleboro was not settled until some time after the close of King Philip's War, and that at some time in the latter part of the 18th century the Stillwater Furnace furnished employment for about forty men in the manufacture of hollow-ware from the (bog) iron ore obtained from neighboring ponds. This business was successfully carried on by Captain Zenas Wood. Well, Sir, that's history for you. There's the written and printed history of the Stillwater Furnace and the man who managed it, made a fortune and a reputation, and went down in history. What of the other forty? How big was this business? What did they make? How did they live? Let's see what we can make this old ledger tell us.

This record starts in 1792 and was definitely owned and managed at that time by Abner Wood & Son. If you will scan the index in Weston's History you will agree that when studying the Wood family there is plenty of room for mistakes—but —Abner is not listed. It is possible that Zenas was Abner's son. We can't prove that Abner founded the business but since this is the only known manuscript record and the only record aside from Weston of this furnace, it can be suggested as a good bet that Zenas did not.

Abner Wood & Son operated on a partnership basis, and today might have been considered a relatively large corporation as evidenced by the following accounting in 1792:—

"Furnace Owners to Refused Ware Divided amongst owners according to what he owned/

128 Tea Kittles 70 hand kittles 56 bake pan bottoms & covers
120 skillets 61 spiders 10 basons

698 Good Tea Kittles divided amongst owners & turn'd out to each one his port."

There is no way of finding out just how many partners there were unless we assume that all forty or fifty moulders and other workmen shared alike in the enterprise.

The output of one 1792 blast totaled over 143 tons of hollow ware. (A blast in those days took from six to ten months, and included building the hearth and producing the iron). In terms of production, Stillwater manufactured from these 143 tons of iron:—

"457½ large bake pan bottoms
469 covers for do—
505½ med. bake pan bottoms
513 covers for do—
503 hand kittles
438 hand pots
511½ high pans
553 pr. flats
160 cart & cha(i)se boxes
10 mortors
874 large spiders
1210 skillets
110 pr. hand dogs
112 basons
2213 tea kittles."

The men who produced these necessary articles for the housewife and husbandman in this period just after the Revolution were Peleg Bryant, Benjamin Waterman, Stephen Bradford, Joseph Aldrige, Hopestill Bisbee, Jr., Joseph Everson, Joshua Pierce, George Shaw, Jr., Ezra Bisbee, Robert Sturtevant, Robert Sturtevant, Jr., Lemuel Bryant, Ezekial Bryant, Levi Pierce and Hopestill Bisbee. The chart showing what each man made is listed under "Weight Ware." There are pages and pages of each worker's production in detail, showing what he was paid for the manufacture of each piece. The cost of digging bog ore and ground ore, hauling ore to the Hill, hauling "Jersey Ore" from the Rochester Wharf to the Hill, "hard cole and pine cole," tending the "top," tending the "grismill," building the hearth, hauling a hearth from Wareham, drawing ore from Assawampsett and Miller's Landing on Long Pond, from Tinkham's Landing "on his shore," and a hundred and one other little records that all create a vivid picture of iron manufacture in Middleboro just before the 19th century should be printed for the students of American history—but our space is limited.

I can't close the book leaving you with the impression that the short list of manufactures is complete. Here and there I find listings of "waggon" wheels, window weights, griddles, flasks, and of course that word "ware" probably covered many other articles about which we shall never know. Before this account closes in 1799, many more names appeared—moulders, smiths, "gutterers," draymen, masons and "fyre tenders." To report every family name involved in this one forge, furnace, foundry, gristmill and sawmill would take another page. A short list of the workers and (or) partners during this period from 1792 to 1799 should include (under smithwork and moulders): Bennett, Clark, Coombs, Gammons, Haskins, Elmes, Hall, Pope, Sherman, Smith and Tinkham. After Zenas Wood took over, the plant employed over fifty men in actually producing iron ware, not counting those who hauled "stun," "shels," "cole," and ore both local and imported from New Jersey.

So much for a short history of the production of Stillwater Furnace from 1792 to the end of the century. Maybe one of these days we'll print a complete story.

M. M.

EXPLORING COUNTRY LANES

Pheasants dart across lonely country lanes, and red-winged blackbirds swoop down low to rest on the saplings growing by the bank of the stream. Quiet country lanes wind on endlessly; they lead to many interesting places, yet to nowhere in particular. One could spend hours in the little cemeteries that punctuate the countryside tracing back ancestors and reading the amusing verses on some of the moss-encrusted stones. Birds are singing and blueberry blossoms are out.

Marion Road is one of the most fascinating of all old roads to explore. At one time it was the domain of the Cushman family. Of all the places the Cushmans built, few remain standing. All along the narrow road trees and bushes are seen growing up in crumbling foundations, and the wells that some man and his son spent hours on are filled in with rubbish and rocks. For the finer houses quarry cut stones were sometimes hauled over the roads by oxen from as far away as Quincy. But usually foundations were made of the field stones that were found in abundance at plowing time. Stones are one crop the New England farmer can always count on.

Even though the New Bedford Water Works has torn down many fine country homes, one can still tell what a certain forgotten house was like. In one clearing there is a row of wine glass elm trees—a touch of elegance among the rough pines and oak. Apple blossoms scent the air. Tree roots grasp and clutch at the stones in the walls and bring them down. It took a man years to build his walls; it takes only a few years of neglect for them to tumble into the grass. When I see the amount of planning and work that went into making what must have been a gracious country estate, I often wonder about the carriages that rolled through the granite posts, down the winding drive under the elms, and to the neat stables. I wonder, too, about the people—how they dressed and what problems concerned them. The work was hard in the old days, but what a man earned was his own. If he drove a fancy phaeton through town, you could be sure of one thing: he owned it. There were no payments due.

But back in the lane again where the dense trees are over the way, it's hard to imagine what work was really involved in carving out a home, a living, here in the woods. Here and there are large, rectangular fields—fields completely free of trees and boulders with neat gray walls enclosing the waving green corn. Or maybe the purpose of the wall is to keep the trees out of the fields.

Around a bend in the road is a tree that is split down the middle but living. Even a bolt of lightning was not strong enough to kill this ancient oak tree. Not far from this tree is the frame of an old Model T Ford, symbolic of past years, a strange sight way out here in nowhere.

On Marion Road cellar holes are more commonly found than houses. Trees along the way bear so many "No Trespassing" signs that one soon learns to disregard providing they have been put out by the Water Works.

One particular place caught my eye. There were about thirty cleared acres enclosed with walls. It was on gently sloping land. From there one could see miles and miles of trees and beyond them Pocksha Pond. To enter the place, one passes between two cedars. On one side of the lane to the house is what is left of an informal garden. The dark red quince caught my eye right away. The soil is black and rich looking. In its day this had undoubtedly been a very productive farm. This year its only harvest will be a clump of lily-of-the-valley, some lilacs and quince, and a bunch of rhubarb. Directly in back of where the house once stood an orchard of gnarled apple trees still looks neat and cared for as if its long departed owner still returns secretly in the night to work around them. In the spring the woman of the house probably gazed out of the wavy windows often at the orchard and watched the children play beneath the boughs of nodding blossoms. But all this is in the past. It is like a dream that will never return. The only thing that's really the same is the hundreds of dandelions that dot the fields and the violets that spread at the base of the walls.

In my wanderings of Marion Road I did find one old house, which although it had burned almost to the ground, hadn't yet been cleared away. Underneath the charred timbers were ornate Victorian bedsteads and an empire sofa. The house, burned past identification, was not too old because the fireplace had no brick ovens. A trunk cover covered with deer hide and with fancy silver designs poked up through the ruins. There were boxes full of old farm magazines dating back almost a hundred years—useless, and yet so valuable to some old man. Even the barn had burned. The only building remaining here is the outhouse. A colorful limb of apple blossoms winds around the weathered shingles like a protective arm. It's as if the tree needed the company of the building and is trying to keep it from tumbling down for the bugs to chew.

Log sleds, massive farm wagons, and stray wagon wheels are found all along old lanes and roads. Some of the old sleds still have logs on them. The cart paths that crisscross through the woods were once frequently used, for farmers felled trees to build their houses and barns and for firewood in the winter. It took a mighty big heap of wood to keep the fireplaces and old black stove going during a winter that started in November and lasted up until March.

At one neglected farm thousands of pine seedlings have been set out in neat rows in the cleared land. Soon the hard work of some farmer will be forgotten and his walls will be undermined. The gracious Cushman house that once stood here is gone. The only visible sign in passing are the three overgrown cedar arbors which the honeysuckle and wisteria are tugging at. It won't be long before the younger generations will have nothing to let them know of their ancestors and the hard work they did. This is knowledge books can't always put across —it must be shown. They must see what was necessary just to exist in the old days.

Here in this clearing on a peaceful country lane, the only sounds are the birds. Scarlet tanagers and blue jays flit through the air, and birds I have never heard before are common out here. Three cars a day is probably considered heavy traffic; not one has passed in four hours. The size of the massive trees is unbelievable as is the quietness of this countryside. The area is much like it must have been like before man came to this place. Now after being touched by man it seems to be going back to Nature. In a few years there will be nothing left to remind one that men lived here. Vines and roots and trees and birds are reclaiming what is theirs—the land.

The trek back never seems as long as the trip going. The narrow dirt lane bends five times then stretches ahead for a full mile in a rather straight fashion. There are holly trees along the way, and civilization suddenly looms closer with tarred roads and the sound of cars whizzing in the distance. Our trip down the country lanes is over, but the memory of it lingers on.

Richard S. Tripp

Your editors would like to remind you that the Antiquarian does not want to be by the editors for the association members. Unless it can be by the members of the association, and the members of the town of Middleborough, and students and historians throughout the Country, it cannot develop and grow into a useful contribution. We ask you all again, as we have badgered many of you whose names appear on these pages in this issue, please lend a hand; send in grandfather's stories of what used to be even if you don't think them important—let us be the judges—otherwise this literary upstart will become nothing but repitition of written history, and, the real "little things that count" through three hundred years of living may never be printed for future generations.

Remarks on Restoring an Old House

My first words to anyone contemplating the restoration of an old house would be—DON'T—, unless you sincerely have such a love for antique houses that you cannot be satisfied until you own one. If such is the case, then go to it, for it will be worth it in the end.

However, as most of you know you must be prepared to live with saws, hammers, nails, mountains of broken plaster, sawdust, paint brushes and pots, floors that aren't there, gaping holes in the walls, and many other inconveniences attendant thereto, for some time to come. Your house will never be clean. There will be a constant shifting about of the household until you never know where anything is. Every morning you will comb plaster out of your hair and your breakfast toast is liable to wind up spread with a mixture consisting of one half butter and one half plaster. This will occur because, in your haste t get to work, you forgot that there was a bag of plaster in fron of the refrigerator—consequently as you rounded the corner of the kitchen you put your foot in it, overturning the whole bag and creating a dust storm. It will be the one that you forgot to move as you stumbled off to bed at 2 A.M., blind with fatigue. In spite of all this the years will roll by and one morning the sun will burst through the clouds and your world will be bright with sunshine and joy. Just moments before you will have driven the last nail in, patched up the last hole in the plaster, or painted the last clapboard, and the end has come. You will step back, take a long look, and there, resplendent in the sun, will be your house, done, finished, and complete. All of the "Blood, sweat, and tears," frustrations, and anger will be gone and there will remain only the joy of seeing a house, your house, once more able to stand proud and beautiful as it once did many years before.

We have not had the pleasure of being able to do this as yet. We are still knee deep in plaster cement, etc. However, we still have the courage and hope, spurred on by the visible results of each day's labor, plus the certain knowledge that the end has to come sometime. Which will outlast the other?

When we bought the Silas Wood house, my partner and I committed every major sin in the "How not to buy a House Book."

I was driving along South Main Street one cold March afternoon about 2:30 two years ago. I spotted the house trying vain to hide itself behind the tall hedges, slowed down to admire it, when suddenly I spotted the For Sale sign on the front lawn. Immediately I made an illegal "U" turn and headed for the nearest telephone uptown. I was lucky (?) and got the agent on the first try. We made an appointment to meet at the house in ten minutes. By the time I got there he had already arrived and was waiting with an anxious look in his eye. We introduced ourselves, unlocked the front door, and went inside and began the tour to the running accompaniment of the agent's chatter. Once inside I saw the wide board floors, the panelling in the upper bedroom, and the piece de resistance, for me, the large wide fireplace with the bake ovens in the back room. From that point on the tour assumed a rather perfunctory air, and I don't remember seeing anything very clearly. Through the haze of my joy at such a perfect find, I do have a recollection of the Agent pointing out a particular door handle and assuring me that it was all "original" and had come with the house. However, on closer inspection at a later date it turned out to be the circular handle from a Victorian dresser.

Having seen all that I desired at this point, I made an appointment to see it again later that evening along with my Mother and my partner.

We arrived at exactly seven P.M. armed with two rather battered flashlights, which were to provide light for this littl expedition. After a round of introductions and a great rattling of keys, the door was opened and we proceeded with the business at hand. About fifteen minutes after we had begun the tour the lights began to dim and finally went completely out. The agent had forgotten to bring his, so there we were. Consequently, the rest of the tour was conducted with burning matches and the light from the end of an old candle that we found on the floor which, needless to say, proved quite unsatisfactory. The house was freezing cold and so were we, and shortly thereafter we emulated the flashlights and gave up entirely. But even with this little bit, I had seen enough. This was it—the house for me. All that remained was to convince the others involved that this was indeed a remarkable house. It turned out that this was an easier project than I thought. We all love old houses, and so it took very little convincing.

The "book" says you are supposed to look at beams, sills, walls, ceilings, roof structure, and the like. However, these things were completely forgotten as we went blithely along with the delirious anticipation of actually being able to live in a house that was built before the American Revolution. Little did we know that the surprises were to come later on.

The morning following, the necessary legal maneuvers were completed with a speed never before, I am sure, achieved in the history of Real Estate. Everything went so smoothly it was as if there were some outer force moving things along toward the inevitable conclusion. In exactly one hour from the time that we reached the agent's office, we were, in theory at least, the owners of a practically prehistoric marvel.

Immediately after the formalities were over, hardly able to contain the fever that burned in our minds, we rushed back to look at the marvelous buy we had gotten, and at such a good price, too. "How smart we are," thought I, in a fit of smugness. Never has anything looked so beautiful, to me, as that poor bedraggled house did on that day. Still trying to hide itself behind the hedges and looking, to other people I suppose, very ugly with its peeling yellow paint. The thought that here at last one of my fondest dreams was actually coming true was almost too much for me. I was going to be able to live in a house that had seen and lived through almost all of the important history of our country since the beginning.

As the day wore on and our minute inspection probed deeper and deeper into areas that we had not been in heretofore much of the joy and optimism began to fade away. By the evening of that first day we were more or less shattered at all of the damage that we had found. There was so much work that would have to be done. At this point our collective tails were dragging between our legs. There were sills to be replaced, new flooring in several areas, and a great deal of the plaster was in deplorable condition. We discovered that one whole floor, subfloor, and all of the underpinning would have to be removed and be completely rebuilt. The kitchen floor had a thirty degree tilt in it which, although terribly authentic, was a little impractical from the point of placing furniture. One of the old "gunstock" corner posts was standing there, for all the world as if it were doing its designed job, and to this day I haven't been able to figure out what was keeping it upright. For the purposes of further investigation we removed the casing and with a great crash and a cloud of old sawdust it fell to the floor at our feet. What more could happen. The point of despair had almost been reached.

However, there was one little bright ray of sun in the whole day. Just before we decided to call it quits we were tapping the plaster walls in an effort to determine their soundness. The answering sound from the area just above the fireplace in the front room led me to believe that there might be something of interest back of the plaster. Seizing the hammer, I selected a likely spot, intending only to produce a small hole that could easily be patched up if my theories proved wrong, and gave it a sharp smack. Imagine my astonishment to have the entire upper area of plaster lean forward and come crashing down into the room. Before I could recover from my first surprise and move, the rest of it came down right on the top of my head. For a moment or so I felt as if my head had suddenly become unhinged from its moorings, but as I slowly wiped the plaster out of my eyes I beheld a sight that made me take back all of my current insulting thoughts and indeed, commend myself on my good fortune. Joy of joys, for there staring me in the face was a wall containing some of the most interesting panelling that I had ever seen. And wonder of wonders, it was all original and in quite good condition.

Immediately I went on a rampage with my hammer. I went around busting large holes in all of the walls in the place, oblivious to the idea that I might leave a trail of collapsing plaster behind me. Two of the areas gave evidence of having more panelling behind them, but by this time it was quite dark and so on this happy note we decided to leave any further discovery, good or bad, until the morning. I spent most of that night awake and tossing and turning about in the bed trying to decide if we had been "taken" so to speak, or whether perhaps we had gotten hold of a house that was more important historically than anyone had realized. We are still trying to answer that question.

Early last fall it became apparent that we would have to do some work in the large rear room, commonly known as the keeping room. But where to begin. I knew that there was some panel work in the rear wall under all of the plaster and thought it would be a good idea to expose the wood. I had conceived, in my mind, the picture of wonderfully aged wood, restored to its mellow pine finish, glistening in the lamplight, and thought how charming it would be. Once the project had started that mental picture hastily rearranged itself. In fact disappeared altogether.

Acting on this idea, the next two days were spent in removing the plaster from the walls. The house, our clothes, our hair, and even our food was covered with flying plaster dust and bits of wood splinters from the lathwork. The wood was eventually laid bare, but the results were not entirely what had been expected. Upon close examination we found that much of the panelling near the floor was either rotten or rotting. We also found that the two "gunstock" posts holding up the rear 'girts' were rotten and were standing up only by reason of the nails that had been driven into them from the outside of the house. The three windows that occupied the back wall were quite obviously not the original ones. From the method of installation it was evident that they had been added quite some time after the house was built, or at least that portion of it. That carpenter should have taken up plumbing instead. The openings that had been cut into the wood to receive the window frames were much larger than they should have been. The cutting hadn't even been done straight. It was the most ragged, misshapen cutting I had seen. The result was that there had been a good deal of patching and bracing to get the windows to stay in. When the bracing was disturbed, all of the windows fell out on the ground almost simultaneously. The aforementioned procedures had also ruined a good deal of the panelling.

A hasty conference was called with my partner and many things were discussed. Even the idea of selling the remains was talked over. However, we decided against that and felt that we might as well go ahead and see what we could do with what was left. We finally decided that the thing to do was to remove the panelling, pull up part of the floor, and see if we couldn't correct the slight pitch that there was to it. It had been evident, from the beginning that there was something wrong under the floor, but I felt it was just due to the fact the house had settled with the passing years. We were totally unprepared for what followed. Where had once been an eight inch square oak sill, there was nothing but wet, moldy sawdust and powdered wood for perhaps a distance of thirty-five feet. There was not one piece of sill that could be picked up whole. It actually had to be scooped up with a shovel to remove it. The cross floor beams were resting on nothing but air. The whole back of the house was being supported only by the outer wall planking, which ran vertically, and was pinned to the upper girts by rotting wooden pegs. The ends of the planks, which normally would have been pinned to the sill, were just resting in the dirt and mud. All the rest of the framework was just resting in their respective notches and contributing nothing to the support of the house. Why in heaven's name the house didn't collapse in a heap of rubble I will never be able to understand. It certainly had every opportunity. This removal process went on for several days. Each deteriorated piece that we removed uncovered another piece in equally as bad condition and it just kept going until the point came when the entire wall had been removed and the back was open to the four winds, so to speak.

For the next two weeks, while we painstakingly searched out pieces with which to replace the destroyed ones, or in many cases made them ourselves, the wall remained open. Each night before going to bed I would make a little prayer that there would be a cessation of all Massachusetts-type weather until we were able to get things back together again. Fortunately for us, it remained cool and dry right up until the day after we had completed the construction work. That day the skies opened up and it rained for three days.

Although the job was a messy one and much hard physical labor was involved, it was also an interesting one. It gave me the chance of examining in minute detail the construction of an early house. By taking each piece apart it was possible to determine in what order the construction had been done, what materials had been used, and above all I think it gave me a good healthy respect for those early home builders. With not even one third of the knowledge of construction, nor any of the tools that we have nowadays, they had put together a house that had withstood two hundred years of wind, snow, heat and storms. The fact that it was finally beginning to show its age was a human fault and not a fault of the construction. With the crudest of implements these people had fashioned a house that I will venture to say, even now, will outlast many of the houses of today.

They say parting is such sweet sorrow, but reunions are rather pleasant too—and I wonder if Silas Wood's face would light up with pleasure if he could come back to Middleboro, walk down route 25 a piece, struggle down Center street, dodge the crazy drivers, smother his disgust at the new buildings, the blinding electric lights and the cement pavements and sidewalks—and finally crawl back into his old home. Would he realize what a haven in a wilderness of "mosts" and "craziests" his snug little 18th century house really was—and still is? I like to think so.

Richard Aldrich

Lawrence B. Romaine and Richard T. Wotten, Associate Editors.

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NOTICE

The editorial staff of The Antiquarian is planning, beginning with the next issue, a publication designed to be of greater interest and value.

In line with this policy we will publish five issues a year in place of the usual four: January, April, June, September, and December.

For your convenience starting with the January issue we are offering The Antiquarian at the subscription price of $1 for five issues. It will continue to be on sale at present locations at 25c a copy.

The members of the Historical Association will continue to receive The Antiquarian as they have in the past.

Much has already been said in the past, and much will be said in the future, concerning the need for the preservation of our historic shrines, buildings, furniture, documents, books, etc. This is as it should be, and we, as a nation, have made remarkable progress toward this end. Now, I feel that it is time we did some thinking and talking about an area which is directly involved with these projects, but which, because the emphasis has heretofore been on the larger and more heavily endowed organizations, tends to get lost in the shuffle. I, of course, refer to the purely historical societies, associations, or whatever they may call themselves.

In the matter of things historical, these groups are equally as important as the large ones. For they, financially well off as they may be, and with professional staffs working for them, can not possibly reach into every corner of this vast land of ours to seek out and preserve those things, which when assembled, will contribute to the enrichment of our historical fabric. If for no other reason, these small groups are important and must be retained as feeder lines through which much hitherto unknown knowledge, or corrected and revised information can be disseminated. Prior to the emergence of these groups, many are the hand me down stories that have been accepted as historical fact only to be proven later entirely false. As the years have passed and these small historical societies grew in number and began digging around in local history, much new information and data has come to light that corrected many of the existing theories, and improved upon others, thereby adding more accurately to our historical compilations.

These societies, in many areas, are now suffering from an acute case of "non-support" by the very people who so enthusiastically and noisily assisted at the birth of the group. After the glamour of being one of the "founding fathers," as it were, has worn off and the group begins to settle down to the daily routines of providing, not only the necessary financial assistance, but also the time, thought, and in many instances the physical labor involved, it suddenly becomes a different story. There appear a variety of excuses as to why they can not do their individual parts as originally pledged. School children have been known to be more imaginative with their excuses for being late to school. Why is this? I cannot make my mind believe that all at once these people have lost their interest or that they have become lazy. I feel that we must look for the answers in a totally different direction: The organization itself. I do not, of course, know all of the answers. (Who does?) However, I would like to bring up one or two problems that appear rather prominently, on the surface at least, and make one or two suggestions that might help.

This business of public interest is a two way street in any project. To get a worthwhile project going it is necessary to have the goodwill and support of the general public, especially so with the local people. To gain and maintain this support the group must have something of interest to offer its members, who will in turn, because of this interest, provide the necessary active support. Thus the merry-go-round goes on.

The public image of most local historical groups is not one favorable to creating, in an individual, the urgent desire to rush right out and join. Unhappily it is something that must be pushed right from the beginning. There exists a general tendency to think of these groups, if indeed we think of them at all, as unproductive aggregations, or at best, as social groups given to periodical gatherings that consist of long winded, exceedingly dull business meetings, followed by a social program lacking in any real interest and doing no credit to the intellectual level of the individual membership.

I do not, in any manner, mean to minimize the importance of either the business or the social programs. Each in its own way should be, and is, of vital importance to the life of these groups. However, it is my belief that they should be treated as separate entities. What I would like to see, and I therefore will suggest, is the complete separation of these two functions. I feel that when this is done it will be possible to plan not only more "down-to-brass-tacks" meetings that will produce something of real value to the project at hand, but will also allow for the planning of more entertaining and interesting social functions. In line with this, without making any specific suggestions —which would take an article in themselves—I would like to remark that a thorough revision of the existing concept of social programming within historical societies is absolutely necessary.

There is a theory immensely popular with certain factions that, and this is being applied to small groups especially, in order to create interest and make people feel as if they "belonged," it is mandatory for them to become involved in specific projects. To some extent I feel that this is true and good. However, it seems almost always to turn out that as the project continues, a committee must be formed to further progress. This action immediately seems to indicate that a chairman be elected who, among his many and varied duties must give oral, or read written reports to the parent body, thereby contributing further to the problems of the already discussed meetings. Consider, if you will, the plight of one organization I know about. They are in the process of restoring an old building, which will be used at a later date as an exhibition hall. This project apparently requires the services of no less than seven committees, each with its own chairman. Can you visualize the resultant confusion? My whole purpose in the foregoing remarks is not to condemn committees in toto, but rather to point up that which I feel is another stumbling block that must be gotten around or eradicated altogether. I believe, and I have seen it happen many times, that an organization can become so encumbered and overweight with these politically expedient but often useless appendages that it becomes impossible to function in any useful degree. Always they tend to overlap in their duties and responsibilities: A factor that can cause disagreements of such large proportions that all productive action will be stymied. I believe that it should be and is possible to get projects completed without resorting to the ponderous and time consuming machinery of committees.

Another suggestion that I would like to put forth is this: There is an area in which there is yet a great deal of work to be done, and it is that area which concerns the relations between the young people of the community and the society. It seems to be an area that most historical societies are now overlooking. The feeling among many of the older members is that these young people have not much to offer or contribute to their particular work. In answer to this I say—phooey! It is the young people who must be made cognizant of their value and the contributions that they can make, for it is they who in the long run are going to be charged with the responsibility of continuing the work that we have begun.

They must be brought into the groups and made active members and participants in all activities. I feel quite strongly that it is imperative to the future life of these groups that we obtain their youthful ideas and thoughts, even though they may be at variance with our own. Without this group our historical societies and preservation activities will die out and leave much important work undone.

Again we are faced with the problem of how to go about creating the kind of organization that they will be interested in being a part of. It seems to me that the problems are the same as those facing the adult group, but I don't say that the answers are any easier to come by. I will make no specific suggestions, preferring instead to let the general idea germinate and in so doing produce its own progeny. I don't feel that specific ideas and suggestions would be of much help in as much as each group must deal with different sets of circumstances and what would be applicable here would not necessarily be so in another section of the country.

In conclusion, the main thought that I would like to leave with you is this: It is most necessary that we work to change the public image of the local historical societies by whatever means and methods are necessary. To assist in accomplishing this there must be a more clear cut definition of the aims of the group and the establishment of a well defined program of action. Having devised such a program, it must be well implemented and then followed through with the utmost vigor. It is vital that we prove to ourselves, and in so doing convince future members, that historical societies, though they deal with things of the past, can be vibrant and interesting groups performing a valuable service. It is up to us!

Richard Aldrich

AMASA T. THOMPSON, YANKEE CARPENTER

Presidents, generals, senators, captains, authors, artists, and even mere politicians and soldiers are often found on the pages of history. Architects, too, more especially those with rabbits feet in their back pockets, who "lucked into" the opportunities to create and design important buildings, are recorded for their works and contributions to both local and national ways of living. To those of us who read only prescribed and selected history, these very few become our national background.

What became of the men and women who built these buildings, who manufactured the plows Daniel Webster drove before he "went places," who manufactured the guns and cannons that won independence, or even the lowly weavers and tailors who made the fancy regalia to clothe the leaders? Should they be forgotten in this mad rush of progress we call 20th century living? Should we forget a man like Marcus Maxim, who lived in Rochester at Bisbee's Corners, just because he didn't have the financial backing to make **HIS** nail and spike manufacturing machine the outstanding invention of the pre-Civil War period in American development—and let Henry Burden's name glow on the pages of our Dictionary of American Biography unchallenged? (More about this later from the Brackett pen.)

For the moment let me give you a few facts and figures about the life of Amasa T. Thompson, Middleborough cabinetmaker and carpenter. Since history leaves us no record, we can only surmise that Amasa might have been a descendent of the famous John Thompson. We could also consider that he might have been the father of Amasa J. Thompson, Captain in one of the two companies of light infantry from 1842 to 1844. We can not definitely and securely give him father, mother, or descendants. We could decide that there is an error in Weston's History of the Town of Middleboro, and that Amasa **J.** Thompson, one of our local militia captains, should read Amasa **T.** Thompson, but even then, all history tells us is that he **was** a captain!

We do have in contemporary manuscript a complete inventory of Amasa's shop, a letter, and four plans and specifications for houses (in New Bedford) that he may have designed and built. With this small bit of factual evidence I think we ought to set down in print for future historians what little we know.

The letter is from a friend in Portland, Maine, in 1835. Portland was booming, and "good carpenters are at a premium — wages are now up to $26 per month and keep." His friend advises him to catch the next boat, look the situation over, and perhaps move up AT ONCE. Just what he did about this golden opportunity we will never know. That he had in his possession the plans for New Bedford buildings ca. 1835 to 1840 would seem to indicate that he stuck to Middleborough — and, perhaps that Middleborough was doing even better than Portland with New Bedford mushrooming right next door. But enough of mere conjecture. The one sure thing Amasa Thompson, be he T. or J., left for posterity was his own written list of his tools and shop.

On the outside of this little four page record we read:

"Amasa T. Thompson—Bill of Carpenter's Tools. Jany. 14 1832. The within bills of tools amounts to $138.94. — 3¼ days on Caswell's sashes — at Lyons — 5 small windows; & 3 sashes full windows." He indicates further that he started setting up in business about 1827. Unlike the young mechanics of today, he didn't go to a bank, borrow a thousand or so on easy terms, and hang out a shingle next morning. He bought what he needed when he could afford it, and in seven years he had built himself a business with all the necessary tools and equipment. (A subtle lesson in Yankee economy that might well cure a great many world difficulties of 1962.) From the adze to the stove and stovepipe for the shop, including a book on architecture and carpentry, Amasa left behind a record well worth preserving.

I talked over this inventory with Ralph Hathaway, and we came to the conclusion that a young carpenter and builder could easily spend from $1,000 to $2,500 today to purchase the equivalent in terms of modern automatic machinery to produce the same work—or rather a reasonable facsimile. The best machine workmanship of this generation, be it to copy or fake the workmanship of our 19th century, is a poor substitute for the careful skill of these men who fashioned today's antiques. The pressure of taxes and government regimentation had not become law. Twenty-five dollars a month with a garden and perhaps a cow, a horse or two and a rig, a home and a small shop, supported in decency and dignity the men and women who built America.

Since the Antiquarian must watch its cost of publication, I will give you only the unusual and obsolete tools for the record, assuming even the most mechanical of this age will realise that he had to have hammers, saws, planes, chisels and a square. (Do you remember the Camp Edwards racket? All you had to do was drop in a hardware store, buy the "Camp Edwards Carpenter's Kit" for a couple of dollars, apply to the union and pay it $75.00 — and bang — there you were a full fledged carpenter at $75 per week.) It was a different story in 1830. The Thompson "tool kit" follows, in his own handwriting, and checks with printed lists and catalogues of American-made tools of the period:

1 set of bench plans	$6.00	Oil stone & trying square	.90
Adze and broad axe	5.25	11 Gouges	1.19
Drawing knife	.46	13 Chisels	1.17
Shingling hatchet	.50	Small iron vice	.52
Panel saw	1.58	Grindstone without crank	1.75
Rabbit plane—halving plane,		Machine for whetting saws	.75
Sash plane for 1¼ stuff.	2.83	Tennoning machine	4.50
Grove plough & Irons	5.00	Noseing sash plane with	
Compass saw	.42	templets & copes —	4.50
Ovilo & Ostrigal ¾"	1.25	Grindstone — 300 lbs.	6.25
Scotia & Ostrigal ⅝"	1.08	Morticing machine	10.75
Ogee ½"	1.00	Grecian Ovilo	1.13
1 Pr. Hollow & Rounds	1.33	Strike block	.92
Augre 1 in., 2 in., 3 in.	1.66	Spring dividers	.92
Spoke shave	.50	Case of mathematical	
Spur rabbit	1.33	instruments	3.62½
Pr. Quirk tools	1.50	Oil Cann	.17
Filibuster	2.50	Brace & 36 straw cold bits—	9.00

Is this all we have about Middleborough's Amasa T. Thompson? Yes, this is all. Hidden away in some attic or barn I am sure we might still find some of these tools and even other letters or notes about hundreds of local craftsmen who played their parts in building the town. Couldn't some of you do a little work on this before we celebrate our 300th birthday in 1969? Between the enthusiastic support of the Gazette and four years of the Antiquarian, surely **some** of our readers should have developed a small bit of curiosity and interest about Middleborough's past. Shall we just take Weston as our history Bible and let it go at that—or can we still rescue unwritten history, study it, and translate it into permanent records?

Lawrence B. Romaine

SAMPSON TAVERN

One of the hostelries on the shores of the lake was Sampson Tavern. It was built by a Mr. Foster in the early 1700's. It was known as Foster Tavern, Eagle Tavern, and lastly as Sampson Tavern after Uriah Sampson who bought the building in 1798. Later his sons Elias, Charles, and Uriah ran it. In 1852 it was sold to Levi Newcomb, Jr., then it went to Abner Barrows, Samuel Briggs, and Henry Carpenter.

In the early days stages ran from Boston to New Bedford. The stage made stops at various taverns in Dorchester, Quincy, Weymouth, Abington, Bridgewater, and Sampson's was the last stop. The stage left Bromfield street, Boston, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 4 a.m. and arrived in New Bedford at 4 p.m. It left New Bedford Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays at 5 a.m. and arrived in Boston at 4 p.m. It took longer in the winter and when it was storming.

There is a story that once in the late 1700's a bad accident took place near the tavern. A winter storm had drifted the snow high on the road so the passing stage traveled for a distance on the ice on the edge of the pond. The ice had been worn thin and fell through. The driver and one passenger were drowned.

The tavern was well known in the area for its good food and warm hospitality. Hezekiah Butterworth is said to have written many of his books there, and Daniel Webster was an occasional visitor. The hostelry was located just this side of the stream that connects Assawampsett with Long Pond where John Sassamon's body was found. For years a group who called themselves the Assawampsett Club met every evening on the piazza to tell stories. In 1870 the property was sold to a New Bedford family as a summer home. In 1911 the City of Taunton bought the place, and it was cut up and moved across the frozen swamp to be made into private dwellings. One of the three massive barns had thirty stalls. The disappearance of this well-known landmark was deeply regretted my many people.

MUSEUM NEWS

Have you been to the museum lately? New acquisitions and displays are being set up all the time. There are three "new" Shaker ladderbacks from the Laura Holmes estate. Two are in the Straw Shop room, and one is in one of the front parlors. Only one of them has a seat and that one is in poor condition.

If there are any of you who are learning to weave rush seats and would like to have a chair to practice on before doing your own, why not do one of ours? That way you'd get the practice, and we'd get one of our chairs done. Or if you need a lot of practice, you could do all three.

The parlor in the southeast corner of the first house has been changed around a bit. We have added a roundabout chair, a dainty button-foot table with a sugar bowl and pitcher—Haviland china with a gold band—and a lovely little melodian. All of these are also from the Holmes estate. Four portraits, three by Cephas Thompson and one by Manning Leonard, have been hung in this room making it look like the best parlor. Also in this room is an old wooden form with a beautiful old-fashioned green dress on it.

One of our new displays is the Indian room. Along with the many arrowheads, which are all from the Ralph Nickerson collection, we have been loaned three beaded mocassions made by the late Princess Teweeleema. Young Ted Eayers is at work cataloging the collection of points, drills, and knives to make them more meaningful to you.

In the little room with our collection of lighting fixtures, a small display of doll furniture and children's toys has been set up on a whatnot shelf. The display will be shown to greater advantage and in its entirety when we have restored more rooms.

Is there anyone who is interested in setting up a blacksmith's shop? We have a large bellows, a few tools, and an anvil. We need volunteers to build the forge. We would also like to have more tools, old horseshoes, and iron hoops—anything a smith might have made or repaired.

What would a country store be without the old red coffee grinder on the counter? Thanks to Arthur Boardman we now have one in our store. The shelves are beginning to bend under the weight of the many new pieces of crockery, dishes, and lamps that we got recently from the Beehive. We got several pieces of cut and pressed glass from these also. Next spring we hope to be able to open up a pantry full of nice glassware. Do you have any Sandwich, Bohemian, Pittsburgh, Cambridge, or satin glass to help make our collection an eye-popper?

A new drop leaf pie table has been added in the library, and on it is an oddly shaped ironstone sugar bowl. Don't forget—the bookcase doors are locked to keep the old bindings from being handled too much, but all our books and manuscripts may be read and inspected. Just ask the person in charge. Many of our old papers and accounts have yet to be sorted and catalogued. Would you like to help? And have you seen the large hooked rug hanging on the library wall? If you stand back a ways you'd think you were looking at a painting of the Church at the Green.

Two additional portraits have been hung in the second house. One is in the library, and a delightful picture of Grandma Sproat now hangs in the office. Both are by Cephas Thompson so, needless to say, both are very well done.

The Civil War room, which is new this year, contains only a small fraction of all the papers, records, and pictures that we have. Most of the things are in dusty trunks in the dim attic of the Middleborough library. We hope to have a larger room for this collection next year, but in the meantime everything must be sorted out—good work for a snowy afternoon this winter. Any volunteers? It's not only fun but educational, and you don't have to be a college graduate with a history major. Anyone can sort the letters from the discharge papers and the reports of the GAR meetings from the GAR corespondence and put them in order by date. If you would like to help, give your name to either Mertie Witbeck, Lawrence Romaine, or Richard Wotton.

Another addition that you will enjoy next summer is the weaving exhibit we have planned for one of our new rooms. We have a large oaken loom on loan from Hell's Blazes, spinning wheels, flax wheels, and yarn winders. We would also like to dress up store forms in costumes of different weaves and materials. If anyone has any old dresses or shawls or other antique clothes they would like to dispose of, we would be happy to have them for our collection.

More than anything else, we need furniture. We would like to have more bedroom furniture especially as we have eleven upstairs rooms to furnish. Something very unusual was given to us the other day—a soapstone parlor or bedroom stove. How about giving us something to put around it?

The museum will be open until the end of November on Saturday and Sunday afternoons between two and five o'clock. We don't have a furnace yet, but our fireplaces will be roaring. That won't keep you very warm, but it takes the chill off, so why not drop in?

PROFILE OF A WORTHY CITIZEN

Out of the archives we select the name of James L. Jenney because the coal business he founded here in 1865 is still doing business under his name and because, in these hurried times, it is inspiring to look back and see how much useful work one man could accomplish in a lifetime.

When Mr. Jenney died in 1912 he had been a businessman and a valuable citizen of Middleborough for nearly half a century. A native of New Bedford, he came to this town at the age of 16 and worked on several farms here and in Plympton. He also did shoemaking when footwear was built by hand from the ground up, so to speak.

Later, he returned to his native city and drove team for an express company. But the work proved too heavy for him and he purchased a farm at Long Plain, which he carried on for seven years. This biographical note suggests that farming may be light work, but we suspect it was more to Mr. Jenney's liking than teaming.

In 1864 he was in Middleborough again, this time to stay. He also returned to the teaming business. His employers were W. H. Durfee and John R. LeBaron, both engaged in the coal trade.

Later, he bought the wood and coal business from Mr. LeBaron, and it stayed in the family until purchased by Henry P. Smith, the present owner, in 1931. During these years, Mr. Jenney proved his business acumen and won the trust and respect of his fellow townsmen. He was somewhat reticent in manner, yet he was a kind-hearted man and did many charitable acts in his own quiet way.

He was a member of the Central Methodist Church and was instrumental in building the church on School street.

He also found time to hold nearly every office in the church, was for many years a highway surveyor, and in 1880 was the Republican representative of this district in the State Legislature—truly a man of many parts. In addition to all this, he also was a trustee of the Middleborough Savings Bank. He survived his wife, the former Mary F. Hackett, of this town, by nine years and after his death, the coal and teaming business was carried on by his son, Frederick M. Jenney. In turn, the son's widow operated the business until 1931.

Doubtless, many of the present customers of the J. L. Jenney Company think of it only in connection with their needs and have no knowledge of its founder. But we feel that these glimpses through the mists of time are worthwhile. To revive the memory of former worthy citizens brings depth to our appreciation of our home town and the men who thought enough of it to better it according to their talents and ability. James L. Jenney was such a man.

Clint Clark

OLD HOMES IN SOUTH MIDDLEBOROUGH

During the past summer it has been the privilege and pleasure of many people to take tours of old houses in various nearby towns as well as here in Middleborough. Thanks are due to the owners, through whose kindness we were allowed to do this. It meant thought, energy, and financial expense to the occupants to have their homes open and ready for inspection.

The interests of the guests were varied. Some had in mind the renovation of an old house either already acquired or one being dreamed about to be owned at some future time. Others compared the homes they visited with their own home, or the treasures they already own with those seen on these tours. Knowledge of equipment used, manner of living, and many times historical data of the locality are also to be learned.

To some of us not living in the immediate neighborhood of these tours, it brought to us other names and dwellings of long ago which were not included in any tour and many of which will never be included because elements of time have destroyed them.

There are still standing in the southern part of our town many interesting houses. Others were burned as a result of being struck by lightning, or through defective chimneys. A few have been torn down to make room for "progress." Such was the case of one of the old Smith homes, which had been occupied by several generations of one branch of that family. This was off Route 28 at the junction of the new Route 25.

Several have asked why Smith street is so called. One hundred years ago many of that name lived on Smith street, or Miller street in Rock and in South Middleborough and adjoining that section of the town.

There are at present three houses on Smith street and one, at least, on Miller street that were formerly occupied by Smiths. There is also one on Highland street. Possibly there are more.

By the way, one hundred years ago there were but five houses on Smith street. All are standing and in good condition at the present time. (We wonder how many of the present houses under construction now will stand the test of 100 or more years!)

There is on Miller street one dwelling which is claimed to be three hundred years old. This is known to the older generation as the John Morton place and to the younger as the home of the late Col. Victor W. Paige.

Of special interest is the house now owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Roland Tinkham. In looking through documentary evidence as to the ownership of this property, we come across the names of many who owned property in this immediate vicinity as, "Gibbs, Miller, Ryder, Jackson, Barrows, Carver, Thomas, Cobb, Leonard, Keith, and Phillips."

A few years ago while making repairs to the chimney of this house, Mr. Tinkham discovered the numerals 1712 and the initials I. R. embedded in cement. Inquiry has been made about these and a Mr. Henry L. Ryder, recently deceased, stated these initials might be either those of Isaac Ryder or Ira Ryder. He thought it possible, and quite probable, that one of these men built the house. At one time Mr. Standish Ryder lived there.

The house had the usual fireplaces and brick oven. The latter was removed by Mr. Edward S. Westgate, later mentioned in this article, because of a fire hazard. This information was given the writer by Mr. Westgate's youngest daughter.

Mr. Tinkham discovered deeds under the floor around this same chimney. These mention dates of transfer as follows: 1729, 1801, 1817, 1820, 1821, 1827, and 1828. Book and page of recording are shown in some instances and some are dates of previous transfers.

It is interesting to note that one boundary is given: "to wit, my house, that farm situate in said Middleborough in the vicinity of Rev. Samuel Nelson's meeting house." This would refer to the site of the Third Calvinistic Baptist Church of Middleborough, and whereon the present Memorial Chapel now stands.

Before the arrival of the railroad in 1847, when on May 29 the first train passed through "Rock Meetinghouse" on its way to Sandwich, the Village of Beaver Dam was centered around the church formerly mentioned for an area of three miles. The cemetery now known as Hope's Rest was a training ground for Revolutionary soldiers. Therefore, this house, now owned by Mr. Tinkham, was close to this village. By the way, this property boasted of a grist mill, located on the brook flowing below the house.

After the coming of the above-mentioned railroad, a radical change was made in the entrances of the house as the main road was taken over by the railroad and the new road, now known as Highland street, was built. (Exact date is not known.) This old road began just beyond the house, wound around, and came out by the side of the present parsonage. Therefore, what was previously the back door now became the front, and so it is today. The old road can be followed by a careful observer.

Recently this writer went around back to what was first the front of this house and found that apparently the tiny window glasses are the originals.

The later Mr. Edward S. Westgate and his family occupied this house for forty years, leaving there around 1919. All of his children were born there except the eldest. His son, Oscar Westgate, later owned it for a time.

Mr. Edward S. Westgate was a member of Company E 32nd Regiment. He was in several major battles of the Civil War. He was finally badly injured by a minie ball, being hit in the hip and the ankle. This bullet was removed and is now owned by his youngest daughter, Mrs. Minnie E. Shaw of Middleborough. When injured he was left for dead on the battlefield but crawled through the rebel lines, the mud, and over the walls to safety.

In recent years this house has changed hands several times; but through all the changes it still stands firmly on its foundations, probably meditating on the stories it could tell of people and events during the at least 250 years of its existence.

Susan B. Brackett

WATERVILLE AND THE PLYMOUTH AND MIDDLEBOROUGH RAILROAD

Not many people are living today who remember Waterville in the East Middleborough section of town before the Plymouth and Middleboro Railroad was built.

It was a very quiet place; everyone knew his neighbor, the roads were of dirt, and the only way of traveling to town was by horse and wagon. The Post Office was in Eddyville as there was no R.F.D. delivery. Meat was bought from the butcher cart with the little corned beef box in the back, and groceries ordered in the morning from the store were delivered later in the day. A fish cart, also, was a weekly way of buying fresh fish.

Later the Plymouth and Middleboro Railroad was built and completed in 1892. During its construction the little settlement was the center of the road workers who had only their picks and shovels to do the grading. Horses and tipcarts were used to cart the gravel to fill the lower grades. It was loaded by a Donkey Engine with a poser shovel.

Most of the houses that had extra rooms were full of men who worked on the road, the barns were full of horses, and the yards were full of two-wheeled carts. The road was started from the Middleborough end. Tracks were laid as fast as the grade could be made.

It was a sight I will never forget! The first train arrived loaded with rails and ties for the road bed. As the road neared completion, the depot, Mt. Carmel, was built. It's name was taken from the hill of that name in Waterville. After the road was closed the building was moved to Warrentown for a boghouse.

The first train was a big event to all as it gave the people a means of transportation to Middleborough and other towns and cities. There were three trains a day each way and one on Sunday with an excursion train of ten cars to Rocky Point, Rhode Island, during the summer months.

The freight was a big asset locally. Boxboards from Albert Savery's mill; cordwood, slabs, boxes, and box shooks from the California Mill; and cranberries from the local bogs all were outgoing freight. Incoming freight included grain for Charles H. Soule's Duck Farm in the Soule neighborhood where thousands of Pekin ducks were raised; and hoops, staves, and box shooks for cranberries to the California Mill. The side track during the cranberry season was always full of freight cars.

The freight made one round trip a day to Plymouth. On the return trip in the spring season, the woods being very dry, a woods fire would be set sometimes burning over a large area.

The depot was a meeting place in the evening to wait for the last train to Plymouth at 6:30. Sunday papers were delivered by train on Sunday. During the week the U. S. mail brought by train was carried to the Eddyville Post Office where the neighbors received it.

At the present time every house in Waterville remains standing except the house where I was born. This house was once a store operated by W. C. Eddy of Eddy Furnace Co. on Whetstone Brook mentioned in the History of Middleborough on p. 349. This store was bought by my father and moved and remodeled and remained standing until it burned in 1946. It was rebuilt in 1948 by Reginald S. Washburn who is the present owner.

The schoolhouse at the corner of Plymouth street and Carmel street, where I went for nine grades, has been made over into a house. There were nine grades and one teacher. Some of the pupils walked to school as far as two miles in summer and winter. Heat was obtained from an oblong wood stove with a smoke pipe that ran from the front of the room to the back.

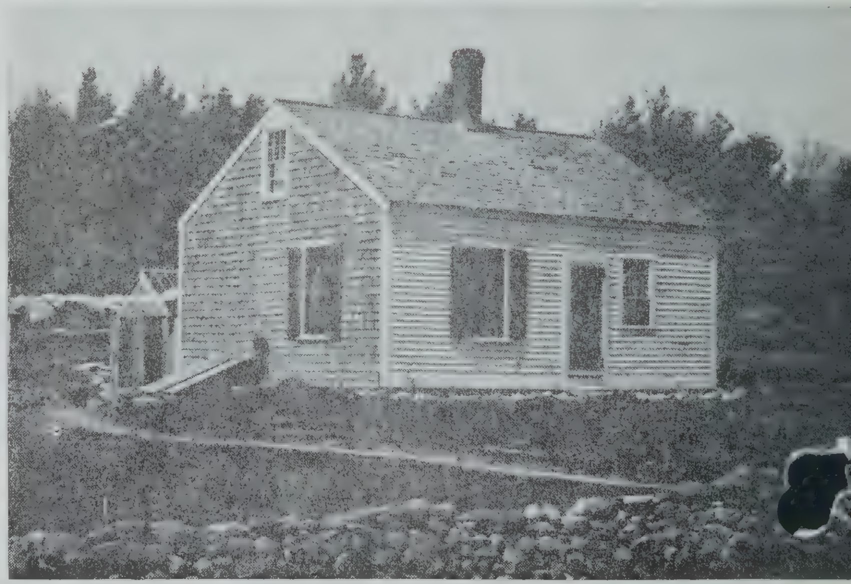
Chester M. Washburn

BELL SCHOOL

The Neck School, also known as the Bell School, was originally built in 1796 on Assawampsett Neck and served as a Baptist meeting house as well as a school.

The school was heated by a curious looking oval stove called a hog back, which was cast in Assonet by Captain Job Peirce. One student tried to blow the building up by putting powder in the stove, but the plan failed. When the school was closed the hog back was taken to Middleborough to heat a garage. A town meeting was held in Lakeville, and it was decided that the stove should be returned. Whether or not it was is a mystery.

Zebulon Canedy bought the school building at an auction and later sold it to Clifton Nelson. It was moved to the Nelson farm and made into a dwelling house. The building was purchased in 1946 and torn up for lumber.



DEBORAH SAMPSON'S HOUSE

This was the home of Middleborough's best known and most patriotic woman, Deborah Sampson. She fought for two years in the Revolutionary War.

YANKEE HERITAGE

One day as I was talking with a friend, I said something about Yankees and their heritage. The friend laughed and said the term "Yankee heritage" was just a hackneyed expression old New Englanders were fond of spouting. She asked laughingly what kind of a heritage Yankees could possibly have. She was only joking, of course; every group of people has a heritage, and usually like the Yankees, they are fiercely proud of it.

Too few people, though, realize what the Yankee heritage is. It is made up of many things. To begin with, let's consider the architecture of old New England. Knowing the early settlers had only a few rough tools to work with, it's amazing when we think of what they accomplished. Their sturdy houses protected them from the savage Indian attacks and still stand today as reminders of a time when a man put a high value on quality and the idea of permanence. Many old houses still have their original windowpanes to say nothing of hinges, door latches, and floors. While newer houses deteriorate quite quickly and noticeably, many older houses often stand empty for decades with scarcely any serious injury. In fact, one of the reasons old homes are so popular is that they stand up well under the strain of time —and children. In addition to all this, they are full of warmth and charm.

The old houses here in the six New England states are very likely the most photographed buildings in the country, because while they are simple, they are beautiful.

The same may be said about our churches. Daniel Webster called the Church at the Green one of the most beautiful he had ever seen. And thousands of people will agree with that. Literally hundreds of tourists and local people take pictures of this magnificent structure every year. It's lines are simple and appealing in contrast to the ornate, heavy, and elaborately ugly cathedrals of Europe. The early founders of this country didn't have much to work with, but what they did have was used to great advantage. This is really artistry.

Many people will agree there is nothing that is more fun than going to a good old-fashioned auction in the summer. Auctions draw people like honey draws flies. People flock from all corners of the state, and tourists from all over the country take time out from their vacations to go to auctions. This last summer at the Rotch auction in Lakeville dealers came from as far away as Pennsylvania just for those three days. Why? Because they know antiques are popular and profitable. They are, for the most part, good sturdy servicable pieces which people are proud to have in their homes. Yet they were fashioned many years ago by some old Yankee for his family's everyday use—carved out of a slab of pine, or turned on a potter's wheel, or maybe hammered out by a traveling tinsmith. Even though most antique pieces of furniture, which were individually turned out, are sturdy and will long outlast plastic chairs with coat hanger legs, we still find cartoonists drawing pictures of irate husbands sitting on the floor amidst a heap of sticks that was a short time before a lovely antique chair his wife bought. Once in a while there is an old chair that falls in a heap of dust. What the cartoonist doesn't tell you is that after being used in a family for a hundred years, it held up one end of a row of chicken nests in a hen house where it was rained upon for another century or so. Early antique furniture just can't be replaced. It is another one of the living reminders of Yankee ingenuity and skill.

Boston is well known for its Revere silver. To own Revere silver is to be distinguished, and a connoisseur with fine taste. This is craftsmanship recognized, not just in this area, but all over the world. Doesn't this fact greatly enhance the Yankee tradition? We in Middleborough don't even have to look as far as Boston for a man of great creative ability. At the museum we have no less than twelve of Cephas Thompson's portraits. In Middleborough a family can't be much more Yankee in origin than the Thompsons. Cephas painted many of the early presidents (including Jefferson) and many writers of great importance.

While we're on the subject of the creative arts, let's look at writing. John Adams and John Quincy Adams are famous men of letters. They were also both presidents of our country, and they were of old New England stock. The Alcotts were a family of prominent writers, and Emerson and Hawthorne are more widely read today than they were in their own time. Thoreau, though of French descent, was greatly influenced by Emerson and by the idyllic beauty of New England; he is considered to have been practically a genius, if not that, for his works are full of truth and universality. These men of the past are only a few who have done so much to elevate our literary reputation in the world. Even today Robert Frost, one of the most widely read and best loved poets, traces his ancestry back deep into the beginning of New England. He considers New England a part of him—a very wonderful part, and he certainly is a most important part of it.

Old Yankee foods, too, are something traditional and quite delicious at the same time. Clambakes are a Yankee specialty. Then there are baked beans, johnny cake'n'eel, apple and blueberry pies, herring, and seafoods. The seafood industry, incidentally is a very important one. New Bedford supplies the world with most of its scallops, clams, and quahogs, while Maine is famous for its lobsters. New England is famous, too, for its cranberries. Many tons of them are grown right here in town. Middleborough is historically rich in many ways; it's too bad more people aren't actively interested in helping to preserve and display what small museums like ours are trying to keep for the future. We have so much to accomplish and so few people willing to help!

Morgan horses were developed in Vermont, and today Morgans are thought to be one of the finest of all breeds. Yet the originator was just another Yankee by the name of Justin Morgan. New England is famous for its boatbuilding, too. It is an industry with a great past and a bright future. At one time whaling was of great importance, and while New Bedford is well known for its seafoods today, it was once recognized as the world's greatest whaling port. Whaling took not only courage and daring, but patience and fortitude, all characteristics of our ancestors who knew what the word work meant.

As early as 1636 Harvard was founded—only sixteen years after the Pilgrim's landing in Plymouth—and today it is still respected as a leader in the field of education. Yale, which was founded in 1701, and Dartmouth, founded in 1769, are just two other examples of institutions with the fine standards New England began to set many years ago and which it continues to do.

No matter what an area is famous for, though, the most valuable of all quantities are the people. These people don't have to be Daniel Websters to make their neighbors and descendants proud of them and the things they do to help form this abstract thing called heritage. If they are sincere in their attempts and accomplishments, no matter how small, they are worth being proud of.

As you read in the article about Amasa Thompson, there are many men who did more than enough to deserve our recognition. These ancestors of ours, however, will remain unknown and unreal unless we dig deep into attics and trunks and translate the scrawls in the ledgers, diaries, and letters. In an old Bible, which was printed in 1828, lent to me by Mr. and Mrs. Alton Sisson, is a brief history of two early Yankee men named Samuel Fuller who contributed to the growth of their towns and country by being God-fearing, productive citizens. Here are several paragraphs which tell us a little about these men:

"Doctor Samuel Fuller, one of the first Pilgrims, came to Plymouth in the Mayflower in 1620. He was the first Physician and Surgeon in New England, and was eminent in his profession; and was also eminent in piety, and in usefulness to the Colony of Plymouth. He and John Carver were Deacons of Mr. Robinson's Church at Leyden in Holland before they came to Plymouth; and Doctor Samuel Fuller was also a Deacon of the Church in Plymouth till he died, which was sometime between July 30, and October 1633."

The following brief biographical note is about his son, the second Samuel Fuller, and it appears in their family Bible in the same old hand and brown ink:

"The Rev. Samuel Fuller, son of the aforesaid Doctor Samuel Fuller, was the first Minister of the Gospel in Middleborough, and was ordained there December 26, 1694. He had preached occasionally at Middleborough more than sixteen years before he was ordained. [Congregational church.] He was a Deacon of the Church in Plymouth as was also the Rev. Isaac Cushman of Plympton, before their ordinations."

The following quotation is from the Century Sermon delivered by the Rev. Joseph Barker at Middleborough on January 6, 1795, which is also in the Bible. It tells us a little about the Rev. Samuel Fuller:

"Mr. Fuller continued but a short time after his ordinatio dying August 17th, 1695 in the 71st year of his age. He was considered to be a godly man, and useful preacher. His death was considered as a great loss, and lamented by his people."

According to Plymouth Church Records the Rev. Samuel Fuller is recorded as having died August 24, 1695, at the age of sixty-six, but it is very probable that the Barker account is the more accurate of the two.

Most of the other fifteen pages of entries are concerned with wills and genealogical data. However, these two short sketches from the past help us see a little more clearly that everyone who did something worthwhile in the constructing of the foundation of our country has not been recorded in the annals of history.

It is people like the Fullers and like Amasa Thompson who in their own quiet ways have helped build a better country and thus have given the Yankees a heritage to be proud of. In fact, while we analyze what our ancestors did, it might be wise to look frankly at our own accomplishments to make sure we are making worthy donations toward a better heritage for our children, whether they be Yankee, Chinese, English, or African.

Richard S. Tripp

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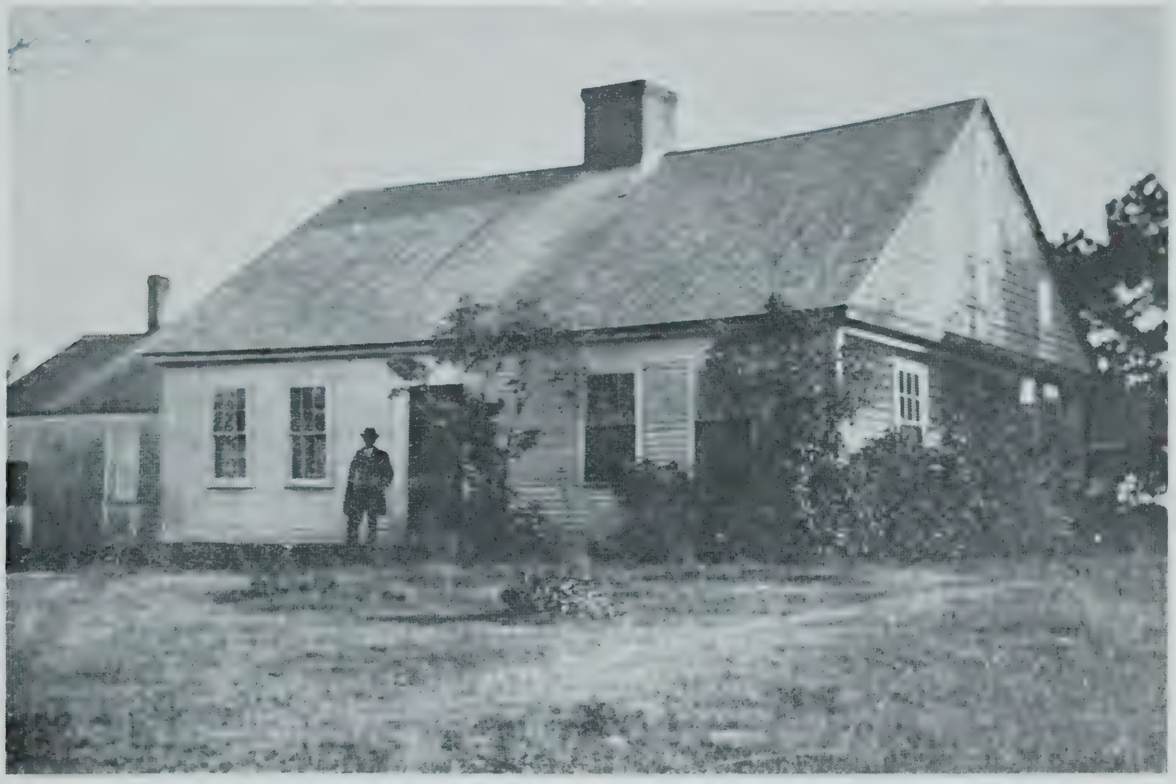

The John Bennet(t) home built about 1687 (E. W. Peirce says 1687, Eddy Notebook says 1691) on the site of the William Nelson house which was burned by Indians in 1676. On this same foundation, three houses east of the intersection of Thompson street and Plympton street, Albert Sears built the home where he now lives after the Bennet(t) homestead burned years ago. The gentleman in the front yard is Grover Bennett, Miss Bennett's father.

JOHN, JACOB, AND WILLIAM BENNETT
1725 to 1774

An Interpretation of a Manuscript Account Book Presented to the Museum Archives of the Association in 1959 by Miss Nellie Bennett

Back in 1959 on the pages of Volume one number three of the Antiquarian, I introduced you to this manuscript record briefly with a promise of further research. In this mad 20th century, time never comes for this type of work — one waits and waits, and then if one really wants to find it he goes out hunting, nails his game, and drags it home. This little bit of time lies quietly at my feet — I must hurry before it wakes up and rushes off to the next job.

When handling a piece of early American 18th century vellum, the first thought is the wonder of it, and perhaps the realization that most of the books published today will crumble to nothing within a mere hundred years. The second, on opening to the pages of still clearly written quill and ink, is appreciation of the Colonial paper mills fifty years before the American Revolution; these pages can still be washed with water, dried between blotting paper, and survive — try it on the best 20th century book in your library. These bits of data might be true of hundreds of ca. 1725 ledgers and account books, but this is The Bennett Account Book. It is without question the most confounding, confusing, fascinating, and varied collection of 18th century Americana ever set between two covers.

Although I claim the title of interpreter, I'll let you in on a secret: I really never should have undertaken the mission. I ask you to bear with me and turn the pages with me and perhaps draw some of your own conclusions. Although this is not writing an article in the orthodox way, I think it might be rather good fun.

Opening this volume at one end we find scribbled in great profusion at various angles in large illformed quill: "John Bennet - Bennet jr. - John - Jacob Bennet - William Bennet - seven thousand - one pound - William Bennett His Book - Cash - Friday ye 8 - first day was fine weath - 1726." The inside front cover and first page is also cluttered up with figures and sums. Turning the book around and upside down, so to speak, we find: "Jacob Bennet - William - William - William Bennett," (again and again). Through the mass of figures and scrawls, many of which look very much like someone practicing bearings and positions at sea, an entry common to log books appears! January ye 1-1725 - we wayed our ancor fr. port Royal Bound for ye Bay of Hund—."

According to Weston's **History of the Town of Middleborough**, a John Bennett was town clerk in 1693 and a prominent citizen of many talents. Jacob Bennett is only mentioned as the man who took over the Bennett Mills in the latter part of the 18th century; these mills were later and more recently known as the Star Mills. No William Bennett is mentioned. So much for written history. There is no mention of any of the Bennett family cruising from Plymouth to the Barbadoes for "mackrel" or "wales."

So far it might seem as though we had stumbled on a very early American whaling log, but don't jump to conclusions. Whichever Bennett wrote these records did not stay at sea for long, whatever the reasons may have been. The voyages were along shore between the West Indies and Massachusetts and as far as one can gather, they took more "mackrel" than whales. Plymouth was, of course, the home port. This is about all there is to be gleaned from about the first dozen or so pages from **either end,** when suddenly we come to 1743, upside down of course, when John Tinkham, on Feb. 13, purchased seven pounds of "tabacco" and a hundred of herrings. Well, Sir, it's a bit startling, but perhaps I'd best explain here and now that this was common practice in this period when paper and account books of any nature were scarce and costly. It was almost a rule that when one generation or branch of a family used a portion of such a volume, the next in line appropriated it for what white, unused space was left — it was not discarded for later generations to use as a scrap book, destroying the original records, for the amusement of the children. This practice originated in the 19th century. With this in mind let us proceed with caution.

If we take up the thread of Tinkham purchases in 1743 we haven't accounted for about twenty years of Bennett activities. Turning slowly over these pages of "tabacca," "kittles," "bog oar," and such fascinating entries from 1743 on, in an entirely different and far more readable hand (possibly that of a John Bennet, Jr., or Jacob, son of the selectman, school teacher and town clerk John Bennett), we come again, in the very middle, to a continuation of the log book! This is dated at the start "January ye 2 1726," and is more legible than either end of the book which of course in any book should be the beginning! Why he skipped the pages we will never know; however, practice writing at sea for a year has improved his hand and we are able to decipher names of vessels, captains, and places more accurately. His ship was the brigantine **Dove,** and the Captain, "Nicklos Davie." "January ye 2 1726 I shipt on bode Nicklos Davie Commander of the brigontin DOVE Boun for Gamacak Wages per month 5 pons." He sailed out of Plymouth, and on this voyage one of the readable words is the Island Tortugas, which is off Haiti, so obviously the Dove is cruising farther afield for new and better fishing grounds in 1726! The Dove visits "Carolil Bay," which is undoubtedly Carlisle Bay, heads for Anguilla, and safely returns to Plymouth, after touching at Barbadoes, "Roos," (?), "Water Roos," (?), "Rooborcill," (?) and other quillisims. There are columns of figures of "bb." of "oyl" and "number fich" and staves. These are all familiar entries in log books the world over — but not in 1725-1726. The Bennett account book is breaking records before it even starts on the even tenor of its information about the forges and foundries and slitting mills of Colonial days in Middleborough. I have read hundreds of 18th century accounts, logs and ledgers, but for spelling this beats them all!

Before we completely dispose of the activities of the Dove and leave behind us the blackfish, "mackrol," and barrels of "oyl," there are several entries that must be left to the interpretation of the scholar, reader, and student. Shingles today usually mean thin tapered pieces of wood used to cover the outside of buildings or one of the most miserable diseases known to man. Back along shingles were and are still, rounded, water-worn detritus, courser than gravel, and found on the seashore. Now of course it is possible that "A Count of Shingel that we landed - 55,150." could mean good old fashioned hand hewn pine or cedar shingles. It is, however, my interpretation that with several active furnaces in Middleborough and Taunton using quantities of flux, fuel, and ore, it is just possible that these quantities of salt-treated pebbles might have been gathered for the production of iron. Why else would a cruising brig "land" large quantities of such material? Perhaps this was only an experiment. I must leave this puzzle to your imaginations and to the dictionaries, encyclopaedias and histories of iron manufacture I haven't had time to consult.

Let's catch up a bit right here. Although Richard Mather wrote to England in 1635 that "mighty whales spewing up water in the air like the smoke of a chimney" appear in Plymouth Bay, there are very few actual manuscript records of the whaling industry before about 1784. I know that Nantucket has a whaling record in writing dated about 1760 for the simple reason that I handled it, but even Alexander Starbuck's "History of the American Whale Fishery," published in 1878, and still the undisputed bibliography of American whaling logs, starts in 1784. In this exhaustive volume the first voyage recorded out of Plymouth was in the Schooner Hannah in 1784.

Just what is expected of a mere interpretation? I do not claim to write either a history of American whaling before 1800, or a genealogy of the Bennett family. I can not even be sure that this entire manuscript record was written by a Bennett, but considering the signatures noted, and the fact that Miss Bennett is certain that it has come down in the family from her grandfather and father, it seems reasonably fair to say that John, Jacob, or William Bennett made voyages in the brigantine Dove out of Plymouth Harbor in 1725 and 1726.

It would be my guess that John Bennett, Jr., gave up the call of the sea after these voyages and that this book was perhaps safely tucked away for future use. When he or his son next needed a record book, "tabacco" to John Tinkham was recorded in the first clean spot in the old log. Following this first note of the 1740 decade are credits and deliveries of tobacco, herring, bushels of salt and bushels of corn "delivered by my son William." Further, John Tinkham and Joshua Eddy bought barrels of "water cyder" and agricultural tools such as hoes. Who first erected and ran Bennetts Mill, recently known as Star Mill, as noted in Weston's History, page 287? No dates are given, as usual, but the supposition might be John and John Jr., since the rights were inherited by a Jacob in the latter part of the 18th century. Yet right here in 1743 we find John, Jacob and William involved in what might have been a mill and a general store to boot.

The next observation of note is the crude, laborious thumb-indexing of this end of our record-book. Since I am the self-appointed interpreter, I will suggest that about 1740 the Bennett Father and Sons did in fact erect a mill and store where the Star Mill later stood, and where Winthrop-Atkins now produces billions of calendars annually. At this time they needed a business ledger, and out came the old log book. I'll throw this line way out over the waters of human interest and see if it proves provocative enough to draw in any scholarly, historical fish. This might not necessarily disprove Mr. Weston's statement that about 1679 the old dam was rebuilt, probably by Mr. Barrows, and that later the grist mill passed into the hands of Francis Coombs. It does however raise the question of whether John Bennett was a partner in this enterprise, and did the Bennett Mills come to Jacob ca. 1740 through his share in the property?

Our records from here on become so varied, one might almost gather that John, Jacob and William Bennett were in fact running the town of Middleborough. Legal advice and the drawing of wills and business contracts mingle with repairs on Ephriam Woods cider mill. Sawing "bords" and hauling them to town provide employment on two consecutive days with "a spell of surveying." Blacksmithing of nails, hair-tongs, and steelyards are in the week's work with "helping to divide the estate of Daniel Thomas and other writings." With writers' cramp perhaps along in the 1750 period we find Bennetts out mowing and building stone walls, and in the next breath "6 shillings 2 pence from Zachariah Eddy for work with my compass." Sides of sole leather, woven bed quilts, spinning coverlets and garters, travelling to Bridgewater and rails of barr iron are all part of life in 1756. If Joseph Bate, Jr., purchased 12 yards of cloth, who wove it? Was it Mrs. Bennett, or was it done at the mill? They sold quintals of silk, trees for clapboards, and flax from the "hackel." Apples and rye, barrels and silk, bog ore and kittles, shoes and fire dogs, readin' and writin', manufacturing and products alike all crowd and struggle for mention in this pre-Revolutionary record of Middleborough living.

If only we had "the Furnace Book" we might be able to better understand exactly what part these Bennetts played at producing iron in this period, and whether, as it appears, they really did have a hand in every Middleborough pie baked from ca. 1725-1775. There are references on many pages to blasts at the furnace from which all manner of Bennetts (Repentance, Arthur, Jacob, John, Peter, and William), Packards, Thomases, Paddocks, Holmeses and many others received dividends in lawful monies or iron ware. Perhaps a few of these entries might be interesting, especially some of the "Mr. Oliver" and "Mr. Daniel Oliver" notes that would seem to prove that at least some of the Bennetts worked for or managed for Judge Oliver and his family.

In January, 1747, he (John or Jacob?) sent Arthur Bennett to Mr. Oliver to receive his debts. For this service he paid him one pound, old tenor — however, this errand also included debts from Nathaniel Atwood and William Ransom. In February, 1758, he sent one dollar to Mr. Rogers in Boston by Mr. Daniel Oliver for one half of the grass in the Upper Meadow. He did not charge the Judge's Son for this errand! In 1758 Daniel Oliver was a freshman at Harvard and probably accepted this small duty as a neighbor and friend. In November, 1752, Repentance Bennett was paid (several times) for attending meetings at the furnace (Oliver's) "to agree with the moulders and workmen" about various blast problems. On May 16, 1748, Ebenezer Thomas was paid six pounds by the clerk of the furnace for "coles." In May of 1771, Peter Bennett appears for the first time, "selling iron in Dartmouth and Plymouth." (This is no ordinary account book! It may look as though I am jumping about like a water bug dodging dragon flies, but this is the way it is written. The key is of course that poor worn, torn thumb-index, but I gave up trying to follow it 27½ hours ago.) On November 29, 1752, the sale or withdrawal of accumulated shares "to Repentance Bennett one "tun" of ware from the furnace, 156 pounds, 16 shillings and tupence" probably points the source of the iron that Peter was selling in Dartmouth and Plymouth. This Peter is obviously the great, or great-great grandson and namesake of the original John Bennett's Father. (See Weston.) Several entries such as "1771 - Capt. Abial Peirce to Jacob Bennet to one tun, eleven hundred & 24 pounds of hollow iron ware from the furnace at 12 shillings - 18 pounds, 14 shillings and 7 pence" might tempt the unwary to assume some sort of average for the cost of castings at Judge Oliver's furnace. The production of fire dogs, great kittles, and small spiders could not very well be at the same cost per pound or ton. There are already far too many articles and books whose compilers have drawn similar conclusions erroneously. In such large lots perhaps cost was disregarded for a large sale or distribution, but as a rule "kittles" of various sizes, fire dogs and anvils were not at the same price per pound or article.

That quiet hour still lieing at my feet is growing restless — yet this amazing account rambles on. Not content with the many chores, crafts, duties, obligations and responsibilities already recorded, in 1772 we find one of the Bennetts making coats, jackets, and trousers (also britches) — not one or two, but dozens for various and sundry folks. There was, in fact, absolutely nothing the Bennett family didn't do — for their own, for their friends and neighbors, and for the community. If you think of something, let me know, and I'll guarantee to find at least one record between 1725 and 1775 for you.

Lawrence B. Romaine

[If you enjoyed this interpretation of the Bennett family ledger, be sure to see the April issue. It will contain a complete inventory of the estate of Jacob Bennett in 1769. Every article is listed from silk neckcloths and "putor" basins to his "Great Black Chair."]

◆

SKATING PARTY FOR TWO

The lecture and pictures of the Nemasket and Taunton rivers at the last Historical Society meeting reminded me of the winter of 1904, which was exceptionally cold in Plymouth County. Lakes and rivers were frozen more solidly than usual. One cold day, 32 degrees below zero to be exact, the high school building could not be heated sufficiently and there was no school.

My chum and classmate Roswel Stearns came from the Green, and we pondered over what to do with our free day. We decided that we would put on our skates at the Wading Place at the Nemasket river and skate as far as possible.

We skirted "Coney Island," Nemasket Hill Cemetery, and Oliver's Walk until we came to the bridge of the Middleboro-Plymouth railroad. After crossing it we continued skating, going by the old Everett street swimming-hole, crossing Plymouth street and the rapids at Murdock street, and arrived at Lyon's Neck where we skimmed over a loop about a mile long, returning to a point within a hundred feet of where it started. We had seen several places where horses and sleds had hauled wood across the river on the ice.

We crossed Old Colony railroad bridge near Cook's brickyard. At this point the Nemasket river joins the Taunton river. We skated under the iron bridge, which connects Plymouth street with the State Farm in Bridgewater. Then we went on to the Old Toll Road, now route 28, Bedford street, North Middleborough.

By this time we had covered about eight miles. We were tired and cold. We took off our skates and hailed a trolley near the North Middleborough Baptist Church. Not having sufficient money in our pockets to pay the full fare of 10 cents, the conductor allowed us to ride into the center of town; we arrived there at about 5 p.m. We paid him the remaining two nickels the next time we saw him.

To my knowledge the rivers have never been so safely frozen from that day to this.

Ernest S. Pratt

◆

IN MY MERRY LOCOMOBILE

By Keith Leslie

Traffic planners hope that motorists will be able to travel the entire length of the Atlantic seaboard by 1975 without stopping for a single traffic light.

J. Alden Miller, retired Louisville manufacturer, doesn't have to wait. He's already done it. In fact, his family was the first to drive all the way from Boston through Florida, south as far as Homestead.

It happened in 1907 when his parents became chilled by the first wintry blasts of November in Middleboro, Massachusetts. On impulse, the senior Millers, Alden and his brother decided to drive to Florida. This was a daring venture at that time. And the family wasn't to return until April, 1908.

Alden, 18 years old at the time, was official driver and keeper of the log. A scrapbook jammed with entries, photos and newspaper clippings bears testimony that the Millers were almost ranked with such adventurers as Lewis and Clark or Daniel Boone.

Reported the Boston **Globe:** "The entire party had a narrow escape from being burned to death while crossing a prairie in Florida. Fire shot 30 feet in the air. It was necessary for the machine (a new 1907 Locomobile) to be put to the limit and through the entire run the party was only about 15 minutes ahead of danger. The slightest accident to the machine would probably have resulted in instant death."

But most of the sojourners' difficulties were less spectacular. The party was held up for five weeks in South Carolina awaiting rail shipment of a new engine after the car's front end dropped over the edge of a railroad track and shattered the flywheel.

Time after time, the Millers extricated themselves from Carolina, Georgia and Florida swamps by hauling away at their block and tackle, attached to a tree or three heavy stakes hitched in a row.

The snorting Locomobile created a sensation in the hinterlands.

"Many times, we saw grown men jump off their wagons when they heard us coming along the one-lane trails that linked communities," Miller recalls. They would run off into the woods and leave their mules unattended in the middle of the road. In such cases, my brother took the mules' bridles, blindfolded them, and led them by the car after I turned off the engine.

"We broke up dozens of school classes. In Georgia, we disrupted a funeral when everyone ran from graveside to see our car, and to grab their mules and horses," he chuckled.

Again from the Boston **Globe:**

"One of the most dangerous experiences that the party ran into was on their way out of Jacksonville over the auto trestle bridge recently erected for local auto endurance runs. This bridge is built rather high in the air above a stream which is extremely deep and is only as wide as the breadth of an ordinary auto.

"The sides are composed of boards which are not nailed very securely, and while the party was crossing, they were in constant fear lest a single twist of the steering wheel should send them plunging into the water far below."

The stretch between Daytona and New Smyrna was beautiful, according to Miller's logbook.

"It is 21 miles composed of coral shell, flat as can be imagined. The sight is one that cannot be excelled in any part of the entire country."

The Millers were stuck all day in a lake near Fort Pierce. After carrying their mother to shore, they cut some trees, built a crib and bridge, then wrestled the car to shore. They ate some pineapples, built a fire and stayed up all night, with mother sleeping on the seat cushions.

In the 60 miles from Fort Pierce to Jupiter, they came upon only one house. The road was obscured by a growth of leaves and thick grass growing as high as the machine's tonneau.

The route from West Palm Beach to Miami lay through miles and miles of pineapple plantations.

Each time the Millers entered a sizable town, they'd find the local newspaper editor waiting for them. Word of their progress was wired ahead. In these towns, they found hotel accommodations. In between, they usually slept with awed but friendly farmers.

That is, most of them were friendly. But one, doubtle the ancestor of today's tourist-trapper, charged $2 to "garage" the Locomobile under the roof of a shed!

Miller's log book notes some interesting statistics. Their biggest expense was for tires: $274.67 for 15 of them! The tires were usually shipped ahead by rail when the family found the reserve supply down to three or four spares. A 40-gallon tank kept them from running out of gas.

Surprisingly enough, their total car expense amounted to only 14 cents a mile, a respectable enough figure even by present standards.

Today's motorist hears about speed traps along the way. It must be reported that the Millers made their entire trip without one traffic fine. But, it was not long thereafter, in 1910 when the Millers next undertook to drive to Florida, that a North Carolina constable arrested them, and they were fined $15 by a justice of the peace for what must have been the first recorded traffic offense of the Florida-bound Yankee. The charge: causing a mule to become frightened and run away.

The story's final note is taken from a contemporary issue of the Philadelphia **Record:**

"After traveling over 6,000 miles through swamp, underbrush, sand, and prairie fires, the travelers never had an accident until they reached this city yesterday and were run into by a sightseeing car!"

Contributed by Horace Atkins, and reprinted courtesy of the All Florida and TV Week Magazine (10-28-62)

THE MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
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Lawrence B. Romaine
Richard S. Tripp } Editors

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MUSEUM NEWS

Realizing the truth of the old saying that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak, we again remind you that we must have your help in subscriptions to support the Antiquarian "in the style to which you are accustomed." We have worked for four volumes to contribute local history to the national record. We have printed and distributed without charge thousands of copies, sending them to libraries, museums, historical groups, and interested individuals all over the country. Some libraries have requested complete files, and we have done our best to help them. We hope our readers are sufficiently interested in our attempt to present local history in a readable manner to subscribe for Volume V (five issues). Some of the articles planned for the coming year will be translations and interpretations of the many diaries, ledgers, and accounts that we have in our growing library. This includes a study of Judge Oliver's letter to Rhode Island's Governor Stephen Hopkins in 1756, concerning the cost of manufacturing cast iron gun carriage wheels in Middleborough and Taunton. We also plan to do some research on the manufacture of Middleborough's millstones and on several of the older homes in town. We welcome any suggestions and contributions in the way of interesting material which will add to the value of our publication.

At this time we extend our sincere thanks to our advertisers, without whose support we could not continue publication.

In line with the restoration of the Eddy house by the Eddy Family Association, the Antiquarian hopes during this year to record in both picture and structural detail many of Middleborough's still standing architectural heirlooms not recognized in the town history. If any of our readers live in houses they believe were built before 1800, or even possibly 1825, it would help us a great deal if they could give us information as to dates, builders, owners, and other interesting information. There should be many old deeds, wills, and photographs around, and, of course, original plans and specifications would be nice, too! Will you turn off the television for a minute and check?

Although the museum has been closed since the end of October, several handfuls of people have made appointments and a group of cub scouts has been through. Recently we have been given a large chest of cobbler's tools, two old turn-of-the-century telephones, wooden barrels for the country store, an old stenciled flour canister, butter crocks, and numerous small articles. A Mr. Oscar Keller of New Jersey has taken many pictures of the museum buildings both inside and out. When we open in April we will have on sale three different views on colored post cards. Note paper is also available with an artist's sketch of the two museum houses.

The tour of old homes last summer was a big success financially, and many people from Middleborough and out of town enjoyed seeing some of this area's most beautiful buildings. The Ways and Means Committee also conducted a successful two-day rummage sale. This plus a $250 gift from Albert Thomas have been very encouraging. We hope that in 1963 the gifts, large and small, will continue.

Since the museum's closing, a gun rack has been built in the room adjoining the GAR room for our collection of Civil War guns. We are also making progress in our weaving room; all that remains to be done is the rebuilding of the hearth, the painting, and the setting up of the exhibit. At the last meeting of the Museum Committee, which was held in September, it was decided to restore the remaining rooms using Williamsburg paints rather than reproduction wallpapers. It was felt that off-white walls and colorful woodwork would be very effective in setting off the many displays we have in mind.

Also adding to the attractiveness of the Jackson street buildings are the newly paved street and sidewalks and our brick walks which Lyman Butler very generously took the time to construct.

During 1960-1961 the American Association for State and Local History sent approximately 1,700 eleven-page questionnaires to local historical societies across the country. About one third of them were answered. It is interesting to note that there were in 1959 approximately 391,000 people in America who belonged to local historical societies. They attended 9,000 meetings; they had an income of $5,850,000. Two thirds of these organizations had their own quarters. However, only 28 per cent owned their own buildings. The property value represented an investment of more than $18,000,000.

We have reprinted these figures from the Silvestro-Williams report to try to make us all understand that we are not just a small group in Middleborough collecting antiques and local memorabilia for local entertainment, but rather a unit (one of the 28 per cent with their own buildings) or a member of a great team working together to enshrine and preserve the growing history of the United States. It is up to us to encourage the preservation of our Country's history and to prevent thoughtless progress from burying the background and heritage on which our future must be built.

L. B. R. and R. S. T.

From an old wood cut in the Museum collection.

THE OLD STAR MILL AS I REMEMBER IT

The mention of the Star Mill Bell awakens vivid memories of the days when the melodious tones rang clearly on the air at 5:30 every morning except Sunday. It rang again at 6:30 when every employee was in his place and ready for work. The employees did not leave at night until 6 o'clock. Saturday afternoon was a half holiday.

It was August 5, 1863, that the Star Mills was incorporated. A small factory was built on the old mill dam for the manufacture of fancy Cassimeres, with eight sets of machinery. Capital of $100,000 was furnished principally by New Bedford parties. The first president was Laum Snow, George Brayton was the treasurer, and the superintendent, Timothy Dunlap. Charles H. Tobey, nephew of George Brayton, came to work in the spinning-room as soon as he was released from the Civil War in 1865, and in ten years he worked up to the position of superintendent.

In 1887, the name was changed to Star Mills Corporation, and new machinery was introduced for the manufacture of ladies' dress goods. The president was now Laum Snow, Jr., George Brayton was still treasurer, and the superintendent was Charles H. Tobey.

During these years raw wool was bought and transported from the freight house to the mill store house, which held 1,200 bags. Quite recently this building was purchased by the late Charles Whitney, divided, and rebuilt into two homes. One was moved to the corner of Carpenter street while the other was moved to Mayflower avenue across the street from the Mayflower School.

At first the coal bins were located across the river from the power house, and the coal was trundled over the bridge in a hand-car to the power plant. When the new chimney was erected the boiler-room and coal bins were included in the new location near the mill. The chimney was built of brick from the Sampson Brick Yard on Everett street. The sand was brought from the Pratt farm. Both the brick and the sand were carted by ox team, owned by L. Bradford Pratt. A water wheel was relied on for auxiliary power. Lighting was by gas made on the premises.

Tom Sheehan was in charge of this department. He was also employed to cart the coal to the boiler-room, the cloth to the freight depot, and care for the two cows. He distributed the milk to the families of the officers of the company. He was driver of the depot wagon, which took the officers and members of their families to the station when they desired. In connection with the Mill Management were many tenement houses, a boarding-house, and areas near Indian Hill used for pasture. I recall some of the early families by the name of Casey, Flynn, Kelley, Hogan, Shea, Nolan, Kraus, Welch, Sheehan, Sullivan, Boehme, Rudolph, Tom Bray (the dyer), Tripp (the engineer), Sam Sparrow (the Millwright), James Roberts (Boss of the finishing-room).

In 1885 when Middleborough installed the fire districts, Hose House #3, with 500 feet of hose, was located on the mill grounds. This building is now my garage at my home at 10 North street.

This concern enjoyed many years of prosperity and was a great asset to the economy of the town. After the 1893 depression, business was a struggle. On November 15, 1899, the company was sold to Frank Farwell of Central Falls, Rhode Island. The name was then Farwell Worsted Mills No. 2. New machinery was installed and the buildings were reconditioned. The operations were "dressing," and weaving plain cloth. All other processes were conducted by the Central Falls Mill.

I remember my father, L. Bradford Pratt, had the contract to cart all the looms from the railroad cars. Personally, I drove the horse and hauled forty new looms to be set in place. My father was also given the contract to cart all freight to and from the railroad and about the Mill Yard. Colin Morrison drove the team for him at that time. A coal strike one year held back all fuel for the boiler. My father's team carted two loads of green sawdust a day from Ben Shaw's saw-mill in Rocky Meadow. This was used for fuel, thus preventing a shut-down of the mill, which would have been a financial hardship on many families.

The first job I had after graduating from High School was assisting Cliff Tillson in the office. Later I had charge of the office work until the death of Mr. Farwell. When the property was liquidated a new company took over under the name of Nemasket Worsted Mill. Mr. Crawford Barnes, Mr. Crossley Stevens, Sanford and Jordan, Commission Merchants of New York, and others were interested. This mill began with yarn, which was purchased on spools, dressed into warps, woven, and finished into men's fine worsted goods. The "dressing," dyeing, weaving and finishing, were all accomplished in this mill. The bolts of cloth were then sent to the Commission Merchants to be sold.

This concern prospered for several years. About 1918 they built two new tenement houses, which are still standing. A new office and large weave-shed were added, as were new looms of the Crompton Knowles variety. Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars were spent on these improvements. There were several years of good business, and then conditions were less lucrative. About this time a strike was called by the employees. Being unable to settle the differences, the mill property, land, buildings, and contents, were liquidated and sold at auction on June 28, 1928.

Citizens bought the houses for homes. Judge D. D. Sullivan purchased the mill property. Later he sold the new office building, weave-shed, and water wheel, to David A. Walker and his son Albert, who manufactured ice bags and heating pads. Since the death of Albert Walker and his father, the new management has continued the business, under the Walker name. Their products are sold all over the United States. Judge Sullivan sold the original mill property to Max Wind of Brockton, who made leather box toes. After him, a tanning company did business there. When Winthrop-Atkins outgrew their factory on Pierce street, they bought the Old Mill and moved their printing business to this location. Recently they have made tremendous improvements and additions and have bought a considerable amount of the original area. They make desk calendars. Through the employment of many operators, these two companies add much to the prosperity of our town.

Rose and Ernest S. Pratt

THE EDDY ACCOUNT BOOKS

A few years ago while living in the Eddyville section of Middleborough, Mrs. Stetson and I called on the Saunders family who had recently occupied the old home of my great-great-great grandfather Captain Joshua Eddy.

During the course of a very pleasant evening, I told them of my family connection with the beautiful home. Mr. Saunders then said, "Why, I believe we have some books which should properly be in your possession." He brought out four very old account books — all bearing the name of Captain Joshua and other Eddys and being the account books of his store, farm, and cobbler shop.

The oldest recorded date is 1754, and entries run for a period of one hundred years. Among the famous names found in the books is that of James Otis of Barnstable, whose historic five-hour speech against the Writs of Assistance in Faneuil Hall gave that building the name of "The Cradle of Liberty." The name of Robert Treat Paine of Taunton, a signer of The Declaration of Independence is included as is that of General Nathaniel Goodwin of Plymouth, better recognized as the Capt'n. Goodwin of "Yankee Doodle" fame.

It is natural, I am sure, that we cherish this find, as Captain Joshua Eddy was one of many bearing the Eddy name who aided in the struggle to free us from the mother country, England.

As a Minute Man he answered the Lexington Alarm and marched to Marshfield to protect the supply of powder and shot which had been stored for an emergency. As a Captain he took part in the surrender ceremony of Burgoyne at Saratoga. He was serving as a staff officer under General Washington at the Battle of Monmouth when he heard Washington reprimand General Lee for not carrying out his orders, saying, "Had you taken that position with your command, as I directed, we would have captured the entire British army." Though taken back by Washington's profanity, he could well understand when he considered the seriousness of the situation.

In reading his correspondence with a first cousin, we also find that he shared the hardships of Valley Forge with him.

Zachariah, the father of Captain Joshua, also served in the Revolution and died of smallpox while in the army. He is buried in the Small Pox Cemetery less than a mile from his home.

While Zachariah had four sons in the army with him during the Revolution, his eldest son, John, served in the French and Indian war. He fought in the Crown Point expedition and was killed near Lake George when he was but twenty-four years of age. He operated a printing press in Eddyville and was the printer of an almanac which was considered "the best almanac that had ever been made up to that time."

Captain Joshua Eddy had five sons. Probably the best known of these men was Zachariah — named for his grandfather — who became "one of the ablest lawyers in the state" in the words of Chief Justice Shaw. He was associated with Daniel Webster in a great many cases, and he numbered John Quincy Adams amongst his close friends and associates. His law office, which stood for many years next to his beautiful home, is now situated upon the Exposition Grounds in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Now, Mr. Saunders' story of bringing these account books to light is most interesting.

In his desire to use the many fireplaces, he wanted to be sure that the central chimney was safe. He cut away the attic floorboards around the chimney and, with a flashlight, probed the area surrounding the chimney. At this time he noticed an obstruction at a depth below the attic floor.

With considerable difficulty, the obstruction was raised and found to be a carefully wrapped calf-skin bundle. Upon being opened, these valuable Eddy books were studied once again for the first time, probably, in one hundred years.

Of course we shall never fathom the mystery of why they should have been hidden from view in the chimney area. We are very sure, however, of the fact that we are grateful to the Saunders family for their goodness in permitting us to own these possessions of a worthy ancestor.

George Ward Stetson

MARCUS MAXIM'S NAIL MAKING MACHINE

Back along a few years ago, Mr. Leo Caron, antiquarian of Carver, asked if the museum would be interested in a small clutch of letters written to Mr. Marcus Maxim of South Middleborough and North Rochester from about 1850 through the Civil War. Thinking quite naturally that these manuscripts might tell the story of Ernest Maxim's ancestors, and what Middleborough Maxims did before they built fire engines, we accepted them very gratefully.

Written and recorded local American history is probably about 40% complete. Weston's History of the Town of Middleborough mentions only Corporal Elbridge A. Maxim of Civil War service, and Carleton W. Maxim who manufactured woodwork for furniture and buildings in 1888. The story of the manufacture of Maxim fire engines will be told in the new History of Middleborough to be published in 1969 on the town's 300th birthday. Meantime, let's see what can be done about an entirely neglected branch of the Maxim family, and see that Marcus is also recorded in history for future generations.

Marcus Maxim was born in Middleborough January 31, 1817, the sixth child of Ebenezer and Hannah Fuller Maxim. He died in Rochester in his home at the corner of North Avenue and Neck Road, now owned by George A. Cowan. The old home, still standing and ready to serve another generation, came to Mr. Cowan through his wife, the late Annie Bishop Maxim.

Educated in Middleborough and Rochester, Marcus Maxim learned the nail maker's trade and was probably employed in Wareham in one of the many mills. During the first half of the 19th century this area boasted foundries, forges, and slitting mills in several communities, but supplies dwindled, and as ores were found and more easily obtained in New York, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, this industry slowly moved out of Plymouth county. Following his craft, as we believe, he moved to Newcastle, Pennsylvania and settled. He shortly married Rebecca S. Officer, daughter of Alexander Officer, of New Cumberland, Pennsylvania. There were three children, Charles Maurice, Clarence Wilbur, and Orpha. Charles Maurice married Charity

Ann Bishop of Middleborough, and their daughter married George A. Cowan who now lives in the old home. So much fcr genealogy and family history, and back to the slitting mills.

Before we go on, let's consider how history is made, or unmade. In this very instance, Mr. Cowan had it in the palm of his hand — or rather in his attic and cellar — to contribute to Middleborough-Maxim history; but, the Historical Association had not been active and alert, and he of course could not know that these old machine models, plans, patents and other crumbling papers were of any importance to anyone but the family. An antique dealer bought a lot of junk, and Mr. Cowan justifiably said "Amen — and good riddance — now I can clean out and make a small office for myself." The dealer sold the model of the first nail making machine designed in Plymouth county to a collector, (he doesn't know what became of the patents) and sold the small lot of letters to Mr. Caron, who gave them to us. As far as we can ascertain, if Marcus Maxim hadn't been fond of his home, vineyards, gardens, and his own way of life, his nail making machine might have taken the place of the famous Burden machines that made the railway spikes that helped to build the transportation systems of the country. However, we must be thankful for what we have and make the most of it. Mr. Burden is recorded in the **Dictionary of American Biography**, and the least we can do is to print for future historians what we do know in the **Antiquarian** and in the town history.

The correspondence, now in the archives on Jackson street, shows what happened to Plymouth county nail making far more clearly than the printed statement in history. The letters are dated variously from Albany and Troy, New Work, Wheeling, West Virginia, Youngstown, Ohio, Philadelphia and Sharon, Pennsylvania, and Bath, Maine. They all concern manufacture and sale of "your nail making machine." They discuss rights to sales territories. One begs him to "get out of the woods — it is too bad for you to live on that sand hill." His friend James Westerman of Youngstown, Ohio, writes about a trap he has invented: "there is monie in it if it is properly brought out." Most of these correspondents were proprietors of foundries, mills, and large machine shops, and they all either asked his advice or begged him to come and take a share in their respective enterprises. Many of them were at that time manufacturing his machines for him; others were selling and distributing them. One purchaser using the Maxim Spike Machine, asks what wages are being paid to operators of similar machines "out West." Another Boston machinist seems to think the Maxim machine could be changed and adjusted to make exactly as good spikes for railroads as the Burden machines; in fact he enclosed a Burden spike and wanted to know what Maxim could do about it. A telegram from Boston dated November 11, 1865, requested his presence at the Revere House to discuss the spike machine with a Mr. Allen. In 1862 a Philadelphia jobber was worried about trade because of the war conditions, and he requested that the Maine and Massachusetts jobbers take the machines off his hands.

In short, these letters indicate that the Maxim Nail Making Machine was well known, that it was being manufactured in several states, and that with proper financial backing and support it might have made all the history books. No man's life is controlled by any one interest or circumstance. Mr. Maxim was a spiritualist, a good father and husband, a gardener, a great reader of Shakespeare and a public spirited leader of his community. Perhaps his machine, as well as his other inventions, did not make the headlines because of improper management and financing — but we doubt it. We feel that he loved his sand hill, his family, his vineyards and gardens more than the headlines. We feel that the $1,000 and $1,100 checks from his jobbers made him comfortable and allowed him to lead his life as he chose. We want his nail making machine recorded in the **Antiquarian** and in the new town history — we want future students and historians to know he was one of the men who contributed to the development of American industry — we claim him for Middleborough, whether the **Dictionary of American Biography** recognizes him or not.

Susan B. Brackett
Lawrence B. Romaine

THE STARVING ARMENIANS

Present day Middleborough folk respond as best they can to appeals for assistance to oppressed peoples in distant lands through their own church missionary funds, through CARE, and through other agencies dealing with the needs of unfortunate and starving peoples all over the world.

But, if we tend to think of this world-wide assistance as a product of modern times, we are mistaken. The Gazette records show that in 1896 a group met at Central Congregational Church to do something for a race living on the other side of the world and responded generously.

We have now and had then a small group of citizens of Armenian origin, and so there was perhaps a closer feeling of sympathy for the plight of the Armenians.

The oppression of these Christian people of ancient and honorable origin by the Turks was no less cruel and vicious than the 20th Century program of extermination the Nazis carried out against the Jews of Germany, Poland, and other countries under their domination.

Oppression was not new to the Armenians. They had had 1,500 years of it. But by 1896 it had become apparent that the Turks intended to starve or murder an entire race of people whose religion differed from theirs.

At the meeting that night, Harry Krikorian, a resident of this town, read a pathetic tale of murder and persecution in a letter from his sister, who said, "They are killing us because we trust in God." Response of the audience was heartwarming; and when local residents of Armenian origin passed amongst the people, they gave $130 in cash or pledges, a not inconsiderable donation considering the economics of those times. This little vignette, we feel, belongs on these pages, for it reminds us that the history of Middleborough is not alone a saga of Pilgrim descendants hewing a home in the wilderness. We have amongst us many people of many national origins, and it is worthy of note that we have never been so provincial as to turn a deaf ear to the needy and unfortunate wherever they might be.

Clint Clark

Articles by Jennie P. Hayden, Susan B. Brackett, Lyman E. Butler, Joseph V. Robidoux and Frederick E. Eayers, Jr. have been omitted but will appear in the April issue. Don't miss yours.

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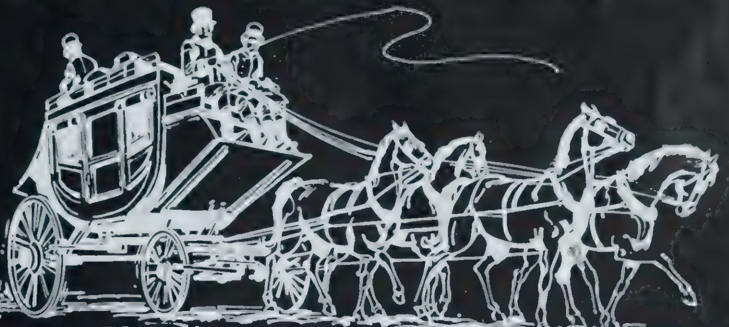

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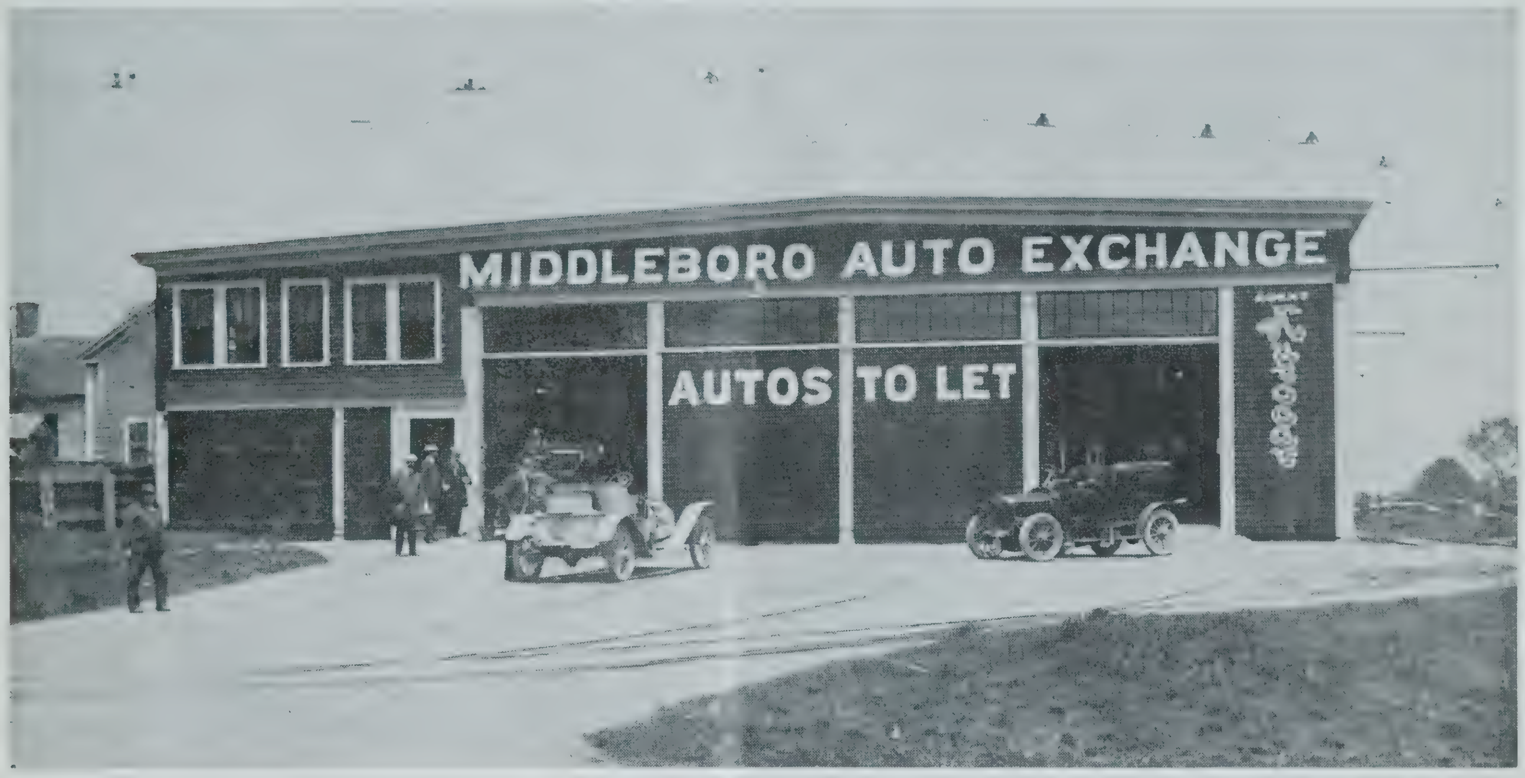

Original building of the Wareham & Buzzards Bay car barn, now the core of the Maxim Motor plant. 1908.

THE HORSELESS CARRIAGE COMES TO MIDDLEBORO

The bright red touring car was parked in front of the School Street School, and the moment school was dismissed everyone crowded around it. Flowing brass lettering on the front of the radiator said BUCK — at least that was the way we read it. Actually it said BUICK — and that was my introduction to an automobile that was to become famous, and one of the few survivors of hundreds of different makes in this country.

A few years before I had seen my first horseless carriage, an Orient Buckboard brought to town by Guy Fittz, who had a small photographic studio on Oak Street on land now owned by St. Luke's Hospital. The Orient Buckboard looked much like a sled with wheels and an engine on the rear.

I lived on Oak Street in those days directly across the street from the late Dr. Fryer who acquired a 1902 Knox machine, the first horseless carriage in which I ever rode. The Knox was then a one-cylinder machine and the passengers rode in front of the driver. Up the street was Dr. Cummings who was making the rounds of his patients in a Locomobile Steamer, which he later gave up for a Wayne gasoline roadster, which started much easier than the steamer! My family at the time had a 1904 Autocar touring car with entrance to the tonneau by a rear door, and — shades of a later time — a gear shift beneath the steering wheel.

This 2-cylinder Autocar was purchased from C. W. Maxim, who had started a garage in the rear of his home on Forest Street in the early 1900's. The shop still stands in considerably remodeled condition, and is now owned by Emil Robinson. This was the first garage in town, evolved from a woodworking business, later into the Middleboro Auto Exchange, and still later the Maxim Motor Company, which carried on the automobile sales and service until some ten years ago. Mr. Maxim purchased the old Middleboro, Wareham & Buzzards Bay car barn about 1907, and this company has represented various makes of cars, including Autocar, Corbin, E.M.F., Flanders, Studebaker, Overland, Willys-Knight, McFarlan and in later years Dodge and Plymouth. Mr. Maxim and other early Middleboro motorists founded the Middleboro Automobile Club and its headquarters were on the second floor of the garage. The Club flourished for several years until the advent of the AAA and other clubs. The late Ernest L. Maxim was associated with his father from earliest days and at the time of his death was chairman of the board of the Maxim Motor Company which has manufactured fire apparatus for nearly fifty years.

Bailey's garage was founded by Admiral J. Bailey, who was a carriage painter, on the corner of Rice and Sproat Streets in 1906 and began as a Buick dealership. This agency under other ownership is still in business, one of the oldest continuous dealerships in the area. Harold C. Bailey and the late Arnold J. Bailey were associated with their father, and the firm had the Pontiac agency, and later, in the early 1920's, the Peerless.

Another of the early garages was established by John G. Howes about 1911 when Mr. Howes purchased the property on Wareham Street formerly used by Rodney Southworth as a carriage paint shop. As the Nemasket Automobile Company, Mr. Howes acquired the Hudson franchise, selling Hudsons up to the time of relinquishing his business some fifteen years ago. The Nemasket Automobile Company also sold the Essex car and for a brief time was a Dodge dealer, and one of their 1920 sales was a roadster which is still in use around town every day with "Vic" Jones as the satisfied owner.

First auto agency and garage in Middleborough. 1906.

Interior view of show room of Middleborough Auto Exchange. 1908.

The old Briggs livery stable on Center Street, long since razed, was the location for a few years of the Central Garage, which was founded by the Shaw brothers, who were agents for the Mitchell car. One of the old LeBaron foundry buildings on Vine Street was the site of a Reo dealership, and the A. C. Cosseboom Co., which had a blacksmith business on North Street, decided the horseless carriage had come to stay and acquired an agency for the King 8.

A little further removed from the early days we find a Chevrolet garage established by Howes & Perkins on Wareham Street in a building which is now a part of the town's public service headquarters. Later this was a Ford agency owned by Charles R. Chase Company and still later by the late Fred Thomas. The Adams Motor Car Company built the building on Everett Street now occupied by the J. J. Wilmot Co. and this was a Chevrolet dealership until the franchise was taken over by the Atwood-Costello Company. Everett Square had a garage in the early '20's where W. L. Aller sold the Studebaker and the late Wilfred Cromwell had a Cole 8 agency in connection with an auto supply store on North Main Street. Charles A. Sherman who dealt in motorcycles on Centre Street acquired a Chrysler dealership when that car was brought out in 1924.

In even this brief account of the early auto days in Middleboro, we should not neglect to mention that the town put the automobile to work early by purchasing a Knox Truck for the Fire Department. The Fire District report for 1912 said: "The addition to the Department during the month of October of the motor-driven Combination No. 1 makes it unnecessary to retain all of the old apparatus in use. Hence, Hose Reel No. 1 and "Protector" Chemical Engine No. 1 have been withdrawn from service." In 1914 a second motorized truck, a Motor Hose Wagon, was purchased from the Middleboro Auto Exchange, forerunner of the Maxim Motor Company.

All over the country in the early 1900's the horseless carriage was being accepted as having a future, and Middleboro was no exception. As the early cars chugged along our then unpaved streets, they were noisy, smelly and clumsy. But to a boy who grew up with them they were beautiful.

Austen L. Beals

James F. Casey with some friends in his 1905 Rambler.

George Philbrook standing beside his 1904 Winton.

Fourth of July parade, 1905. Charles F. David, publisher of the Middleboro News driving a 1905 Cadillac.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MIDDLEBOROUGH?

Historical Puzzles

by Susan B. Brackett

1. Where is Deacon Bill's Pond, and who was Deacon Bill?
Deacon Bill's Pond is the pond at Rock, which is now called Rock Pond. It is an artificial pond, and it is privately owned. Deacon Bill was William O. Barrows, a Deacon of the Third Calvinistic Baptist Church of Middleborough and was the grandfather of the late Levi O. Atwood.

2. Where is Pople Green Hill?
It is a small hill on Miller street beyond the second entrance to the property formerly known as the Gibbs place.

3. Where is 'Lijah's Pond Hole?
It is a small pond off Spruce street located near the farm once owned by Lucius M. Fuller. It is between Spruce and Highland streets, and it was used by the neighborhood for skating many years ago. It is approximately in the rear of the former Highland school.

4. Where is Rascal Town, and how did it get its name?
Rascal Town is a small neighborhood between Perry street and Marion road approximately where "the Fun House" was located before it burned. We are not sure how it got its name. Does anyone know?

5. Where was Beaver Dam, and what happened to the dam and the lake it formed?
Beaver Dam was to the south of Smith street and to the east of Highland street forming a lake of several acres. The village once known as Beaver Dam Village is now Rock. About ninety years ago the dam broke and the lake disappeared. The land is now cranberry property owned by the Decas brothers of Wareham.

6. Where is Rocky Gutter road, and who first lived there?
Rocky Gutter road is a straight road leading from Cranberry Highway through the section known as the Chace neighborhood. It comes out in South Carver and is the shortest route to that part of town. One of the early families to live on this road was the Jabez Cobb family. The cellar foundations of their place may still be seen.

7. Where was Charcoal Bottoms, and who used this area for charcoaling?
This is on a short road leading off Miller street in Rascal Town near where the Fun House was located. Charcoal was made here by the late Mr. Isaac Tinkham and later the site was operated by his son Henry C. Tinkham.

8. Where is Ridge Hill?
Ridge Hill is an area off Highland street and goes through woods and comes out on Benson street.

9. Where is Battle Hill?
The area covered by the cemeteries and the Memorial Chapel in Rock is known as Battle Hill. During the Revolution it was a training ground for soldiers.

10. Where is Pilfershire, and what families lived there?
Pilfershire is an area off Spruce street between that street and Walnut Plain road. The entrance was a woods road. This is on the left going from South Middleborough just beyond the house formerly occupied by the late Mr. Loring Braley. Families by the names of Fuller, Keith, and Gammons lived there among others.

11. Where is Three Oaks Landing?
It is an area between the original Wareham street and the South Middleborough church. This is in the South Purchase.

12. Where is Devil's Orchard?
This is an almost impenetrable area covering many acres. It is overgrown with bull or horse briars which reach up into the tallest trees. Included in Devil's Orchard is a huge swamp that covers an area in Middleborough and Rochester. Entrance may be gained off Marion Road shortly after going over Black Brook in the area known as Stillwater. The vegetation is hornbeam, maple, and white pine. Even the hardiest woodsmen have hesitated to enter this area, and people have been lost in there for two or three days.

13. Hell's Blazes. Who doesn't know what this is?
Hell's Blazes was formerly the home of the Holmes family for many generations. The last member of the family was born and died in this house, never having slept elsewhere in his life. [Also see Recollections of Hell's Blazes Tavern.] It was a stage coach stop in the early days and without a doubt it was the scene of some riproaring parties. It is now an attractive, delightful eating place.

COMPLETE INVENTORY OF THE ESTATE OF JACOB BENNETT 1769

There is nothing that can so vividly picture American life in any given period of our development as an inventory of what one generation has accumulated to pass on to the next. Often, as in the case of the Bennett family, this accumulation of human wealth really covers a century or two. Studying the photograph of the old homestead as it looked in its later years before it burned to the ground, one wonders which was the **Great Room**, the **Bed Room** — which was the **Chamber**, the **Great Chamber**, and the **Lower Room.** If we change these chambers to the master's bedroom, then it would make sense to find "his Washing Tub" perhaps at the foot of the bed. The inventory doesn't say where the cupboard was located, but it does place old hogsheads in both the **Great Chamber** and the **Back Chamber.** The **West Room** was obviously a bedroom judging from its contents, and it is understandable to find the **old tub** in the garret with a churn. One also dreads the thought that **ALL OF THIS INVENTORY** went up in smoke. We can hope it was only Mother's share, and that Sister Weston, Jacob Junior, William, Martha and Zelpha and Mercy all took their belongings away with them — and that some of them may still survive for future generations of Bennetts — and Americans.

But come, I am wasting time — you read it.

Got time for one more page? Let's turn one — Great Scott, what is this: squeezed at the very top of the page, we read: "To Mother — the Remainder of the earthenware and tea spoons in ye cubbord." American inventories of complete households for 1769 are uncommon, especially in as fine detail as this one. I can imagine you are fully as confused as I am — but then, I warned you at the beginning of these notes. At least you have a right to be, for I have confused you, and the Bennetts were my responsibility. At any rate, to the best of my interpretation, I believe this inventory to be by Jacob Bennett's Son of his Father Jacob Bennett's estate. I feel it is of sufficient importance and interest to transcribe for the record from a to z:

"The Account of What of the Moveable Estate of My Father Was Let to my Mother October ye 23, 1769."

	pounds	shillings	pence
his bed in the Great Room and furniture	5	14	0
bed in the Bedroom & furniture	4	10	0
his Great Bible	0	8	0
his smallest Bible	0	2	0
his other Books	0	10	0
one Cotton Sheet	0	4	0
a pair of Too sheets	0	2	8
one pillow case	0	1	4
6 diaper towels	0	4	6
a diaper Table Cloath	0	4	8
other diaper table cloaths	0	1	4
Cotten Table Cloaths	0	3	0
6 Cotten napkins	0	4	6
3 Course Towels and one old Table Cloath	0	1	4
2 Window Curtains	0	1	4
3 meel Bags	0	2	0
Best Chest	0	16	0
black chest	0	10	0
his Book Case	0	2	0
Table in the Great Room	0	3	0
Chest in the Bed Room	0	3	0
Meel Chest & Sifting Trough	0	3	6
Joined Stool	0	1	0
his Bed in the Chamber & all the Beding	3	4	0
his Washing Tub in the Great Chamber	0	2	0
Linning Wheel	0	2	8
6 Plain Chairs	0	12	0
Black Great Chair	0	3	8
3 Black Chairs	0	6	0
Great Wheal in Lower Room	0	2	0
his Clock Real	0	3	0
harness Bench	0	0	4
Bigest Brass Kittle	0	13	4
Small Brass Kittle	0	12	0
Best Warming pan	0	10	0
Tin wair	0	1	0
6 Best plates	0	6	0
6 other plates	0	4	0
2 Best putor platters	0	8	0
other 3 platters	0	4	0
Tea pot	0	4	0
Largest putor basin	0	3	8
his Two Quart basin	0	3	8
Two other Basins	0	2	8
Two old Pint Basons	0	2	0
4 old porringers	0	1	0
quart pot	0	1	8
2 paint pots & Beker cup	0	1	8
4 Blocktin spoons	0	0	9
7 spoons	0	1	1
3 new knives & forks	0	3	0
old knives & forks	0	2	0
his pillion	0	6	0
2 Candlesticks	0	0	4
(Turn to page 99 — where we found that entry: "To Mother . . . . . .") the Remainder of the earthenware and tea spoons in ye Cubbord	0	4	4

TO SISTER WESTON . . . . . .

	pounds	shillings	pence
3 pillow cases	0	2	0
Boots	0	12	0
Rug	0	14	0
One too sheet	0	2	8
Silk Neckcloth	0	4	0
his other thick Cloath Coat	0	2	0
his Cubbord	0	10	0
3 paint Basins	0	3	7
4 Blocktin spoons	0	0	9
2 Earthen plates	0	0	8
2 calves	1	0	0
Stears	5	0	0
the other Great Wheal	0	4	0
Iron goos	0	4	0
old Hogshead	0	1	2
old meat barril	0	2	8
Old Sickle	0	0	4
Sugar Box	0	0	8
Pitcher 6/ fat tub 1/6	0	2	0
16 pounds of sugar	0	7	5½
4 lbs. of wool	0	5	4
to Keeping 2 Calves	1	3	1
4 gallons of molases	0	8	0
TOTAL	11	7	7½
(a dish kittle & 2 spiders are added plus a pair of "wosted" combs and a Hetchil . . . .)			
TOTAL	13	0	6½

Total of what Sister Weston should have came to 14 pounds, 12 shillings and 6½ pence. From 1769 to October 11, 1792 various foodstuffs etc. were added to the total so that finally the estate only owed her 7 shillings and 9 pence!

The inventory continues: To My Self

old Sea Chest & old Box	0	2	6
To an old Washing Tub	0	1	4
Old Hogshead in ye Back Chamber	0	1	0
old Barrils and other lumber in ye Back Chamber	0	1	0
old Hogshead in ye Great Chamber	0	1	6
5 other Chairs	0	5	0
his other Great Chair	0	2	0
old warming pan	0	2	0
7 Spoons	0	1	0
5 iron wedges & Bull Rings	0	3	0
2 Axes & Iron Bow	0	4	0
shovels & spades — 4/, & hoe to clear ground	0	6	0
half the cart and wheels.	1	10	0
half the oxen	4	0	0
half the 2 yokes, Boos (sic) & irons	0	3	0
3 other hoes, Stub Syth & other Syths & Tacklings	0	4	4
horse gears, collor & harnes	0	3	0
Bitts	0	0	2
Ballafs & 2 plows	0	5	8
part of the apparril	3	9	2
4 lbs. of wool	0	5	4
2 hides	0	19	2
1/3 of a quarter of the Bull	0	2	8
half the oats	0	13	4
to a barril of Early made Cydar & half ditto of late made	0	6	8

THE MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
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Richard S. Tripp } Editors

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	pounds	shillings	pence
to the Cash	0	13	4
3 old Sickles	0	0	4
1 hun & a quarter of Refined Iron	0	10	0
to the Runlet	0	1	0
his Riddle & half the parchment Sive	0	2	4

TO WILLIAM	pounds	shillings	pence
To his Tennant Saw	0	18	0
a Augers 2 Chissels & gouge	0	3	0
the other Heffer	1	4	0
one Yoke Boos & Irons	0	2	0
part of Apparril	3	4	2
To Loom and Tackling at his House	1	0	0
Draft Chain	0	5	0
Iron Barr	0	5	0
Saddle	0	12	0
Iron basin & pan	0	1	6
horse grass at Williams	0	2	0
drawing knife & froo	0	2	0
Dung fork	0	1	8
to a Joaniia (sic) that he owed the Estate	2	8	0
a side of Sole Leather	0	10	2
to his Sheep Shears	0	0	8
to his Cow Bell	0	3	0
4 lbs. of Wool	0	5	4
to Keeping a small Heffer	0	11	6
to half the Sheep	1	16	0
Stilyards	0	7	0

TO MARTHA	pounds	shillings	pence
the Bed and Beding in the West Room	4	3	0
his other Table	0	3	0
Trunk	0	2	8
To a Small Tub in the Garret & Churn	0	2	4
old Trundlebed Stead	0	1	0
his Best Saddle	2	4	0
panniel (pannier ?)	0	7	0
half the cart & wheals	1	10	0
half the oxen	4	0	0
half the 2 Yoke, Boos & Irons	0	1	0
Best Knot dish	0	1	8
one tramil	0	4	0
the Small Slice	0	1	0
old Sea Chest	0	0	8
Iron Dog Not priced	0	0	6
Largest pot	0	3	0
to 4 lbs. of Wool	0	5	4
	13	10	2

TO ZELPHA & MERCY	pounds	shillings	pence
Round Table	0	13	4
2 new Putor basins	0	4	0
4 new Poringers	0	4	8
his Red Heffer . . . (crossed out entirely)			
flat Irons	0	4	6
	1	6	6
(March 9, 1772 — Gave Savery a Note for the Remainder) —	11	9	1

To stop here would be murder! Where is the other half of the poor sheep, and the rest of that complicated bull and the rest of the cows? Was there only one churn in this fabulous 18th century vault of factual American history? No glass ware? Only one set of six chairs? Only four sheets? My captured hour of time lies dead at my feet, and 24 others are calling and hollering at me — my two fingers grow weary and even the modern padded swivel 20th century desk chair is growing hard. Somewhere there must be more — hiding under a "barril" of 1725 blackfish "oyl,"or on the same line with Judge Oliver's new mill wheels — and here it is. Whoever wrote the lines "To Mother" on page 99 took a new quill, or William relieved Jacob Jr. on the inventory job — we continue, and find that Mother ended up with all the missing house furnishings, as well as mutilated sheep and the "glass wair."

The new quill in a different hand starts, continuing "To Mother" as listed above, but tires and quits with five entries, leaving the rest of the task to Brother Jacob:

	pounds	shillings	pence
Two Dollars	0	12	0
half of the 3 Cows	4	13	8
the pig	0	8	0
a pair of Cards	0	1	0
half the sheep	1	16	0
Butter fat tub & another old Tub	0	2	0
other churn 2/ 3 wodden Dishes /4 2 Ways 1/8	0	4	0
11 Wodden plates 2/ 3 Sives 2/ Milk pails 1/8	0	5	8
2 Milk pails 1/4/ 2 Earthenwair pudding pans /	0	2	0
2 earthen creem pots pots /6 & one pitcher /6	0	1	0
Wosted combs 6/ Hatchel 6/8	0	12	8
Earthen platter & 2 plates /6 Looking Glass 4/	0	4	6
Glass Wair & Stone Jugs	0	2	0
one trammil 4/ Small Dogs 3/ 1 Slice & pr. of Tongs 4/	0	11	0
2 Iron pudding pans 2/6 Iron Basin 1/4/	0	3	10
Spider Tea Kittle Salt Mortors Scales & Cheese Hoopes	0	9	8
Toasting Iron & Chafing dish 1/10			

Best fry pan 2/6/	0	4	4
3 pots 2 small kittles 4 skillets	0	17	6
Iron Box 2 pr. of shears Largest Washing tub	0	6	0
Sope tub water pails & cheese press	0	6	0
Gears for Weaving & Stays	0	13	4
	13	0	7
	24	0	7
	37	1	2

Mothers part of the moveable is 36 - 11 - 3
She has had of the moveable est. 37 - 1 - 2

So that she hath already had
above her shier .... 7 - 11.

As one 20th century lawyer might well say to another, or to an income tax man if available, that's one heck of a lot of desk work and typography for a few measly dollars. A man with a hundred pounds in 1769 (about $500.00), plus his land and home, was a man of property. A penny bought many things, in spite of the Stamp Act and other British taxes. A penny! And today even five of them won't park your car for an hour, and even ten of them only allow you one three minute telephone call to the police station to find out about your parking ticket.

RECOLLECTIONS OF HELL'S BLAZES TAVERN

Just fifty years ago my father and two of my uncles bought the general store in South Middleboro where one of my uncles had already been working for over thirty years. This store was an old established concern operated by James M. Clark for many years before it took on its new name of Thomas Brothers. This was a typical country store—it sold groceries, grain, various kinds of cloth, farming tools, and household utensils. Most of the business was done by sending carts—peddle carts, so called—out into the surrounding communities. Each day three different carts went out and were gone all day—to Carver, Tremont, Rochester, etc. Actually, the driver made two trips per week on each of his appointed rounds. The first day he would take a load of grain that he knew would be wanted, and he would pick up the grocery order for the week. The next day he would go over the same route and deliver the orders taken the day before.

Driving a grocery cart in all sorts of weather and over poor roads was a rather strenuous job, and the hours were long. However, it was one of the best ways I can think of to make friends, learn about human nature, and pick up very interesting stories and worthwhile comments made by some very forthright and rugged individuals.

For several years I drove one of these routes for Thomas Brothers. One of the places where I particularly enjoyed stopping was at what is now called Hell's Blazes Tavern. During the 18th century it had been a stopping place for stage coaches, and since it wasn't always a place of quiet entertainment, it earned the name of Hell's Blazes. I think I had a great uncle who was shot there one evening when the proceedings got a little out of hand. Anyway, when I went there it was no longer a tavern but the home of Mr. and Mrs. Luther Holmes who were about ninety and their son Salathiel who was probably nearly seventy.

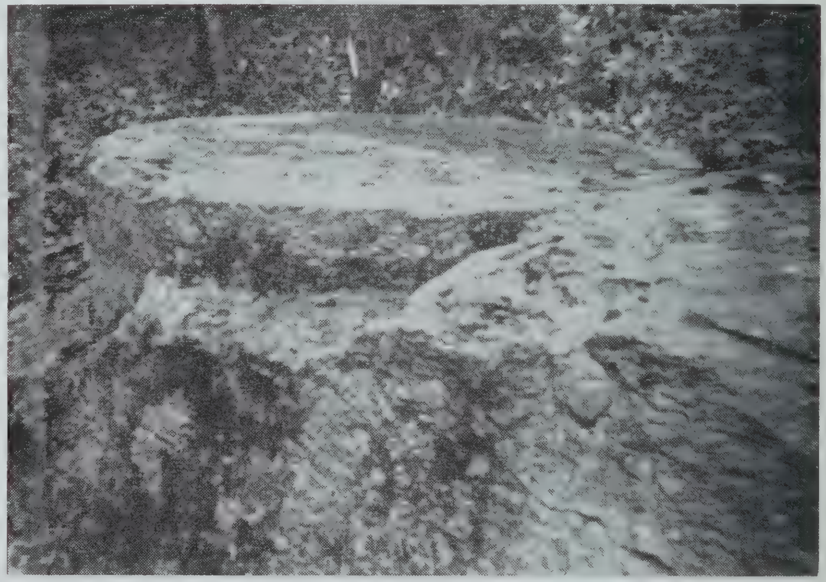
I am very sure that Mr. and Mrs. Holmes slept in a small bedroom off the kitchen that had no windows whatever. I recall noting with surprise how healthy they looked and it shook my faith in the generally accepted theory that good health demanded that bedroom windows be opened wide every night for fresh air no matter how cold or wet it might be. The well for the family water supply was out between the house and the street, and the water was brought up in a bucket. There was a pickerel that lived in the well, which was considered proof that the water was pure.

I recall several interesting stories and incidents connected with the Holmes family. One day, according to local tradition, Mrs. Holmes suggested to her son, Salathiel, that he sleep in the barn that night. Salathiel was rather surprised at the suggestion and wanted to know why. "So you can say that you have slept under another roof for once in your life," his mother replied.

Salathiel had never married, and after his parents died he was rather lonely and began to call on a lady who lived a few miles away. After this had been going on for some time, he happened to meet Al Merritt as he peddled his bicycle toward Tremont. Mr. Merritt was a sort of local preacher, and some of you will remember him as a fine baseball player here in Middleboro fifty years ago. Salathiel jumped off his bicycle and said, "Al, do you marry folks?" Mr. Merritt allowed that he did from time to time! Salathiel considered that for a few moments and then getting back on his bicycle said, "I'll be down Saturday night if it don't rain."

Well, that was a long time ago. The Holmes family is gone, and we have a modern eating establishment where they used to live; but sometimes when I drive down Route 28 and pass the house, I wish I could see Luther Holmes once again, leaning on his cane, tapping his way out to the barn!

Ernest Thomas



AN UNFINISHED MILLSTONE

by Lyman Butler

After reading the article in the November, 1962, edition of the Antiquarian written by Chester Washburn, memories of the Plymouth and Middleborough Railroad came back to me.

Having been born in the Purchade section of town and having lived my life here and at Warrentown and Muttock, I can recall many incidents in the vicinity. I recall when I lived in the old store (operated by Abiel Washburn originally) at Muttock some forty years ago. I was in my early teens then. Of course, the railroad went within two hundred feet of the house,

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SOUTH MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS

and none of us could help being conscious of the trains going by. Having been interested in trains from the first of my days, I used to look forward to every train that went by.

My father had a sizable garden across the street from the old store, and my favorite spot to watch the trains was from this big open field. To get to it we went through the yard across the street where a house once stood in which my father spent his boyhood. This house burned down years ago; the cellar hole is still there with a few small trees growing out of it.

We got to know many of the engineers and firemen by sight as there were quite a few trains passing through in those days. As Mr. Washburn said, there were three trains a day for passengers each way and specials and at least one freight. At the peak there were three or four more cars on the passenger train and real long freights. I used to see freights so heavy that they required two engines.

As business declined with the coming of the auto as mode of transportation, the trains gradually got smaller until there was just a combination baggage and passenger car. The road bed was neglected; there was not much to spend for maintenance. Even the freights were reduced to two or three cars, sometimes only one and the caboose. The last I saw was a small engine, a 2-4-0, and caboose.

One of the things I used to like to do was walk the track. I would walk up the granite steps at the overpass and head toward Plymouth. Many times I would go past the Waterville station, or Mount Carmel as I believe it was rightly called. Of course, many times I walked in the other direction to the Middleborough yards where there were many trains at the time when the transfer was here.

During these walks I, and whoever might be with me, took long walks through the woods at various points. On one of these walks I vaguely remember leaving the track at the Green station where at present there is a storage plant for fuel oil. Some distance to the north or northeast was a clearing and a hollow where there had evidently been a quarry of some sort and a grinding mill wheel was in the process of being cut out.

I had forgotten all about this spot until about five years ago when a neighbor of mine told of going hunting in that area and coming upon a millstone quarry. This interested me very much, as I could seem to remember seeing one there long ago.

Last Thanksgiving day when three of my four sons were home for the Holiday, I mentioned the place to them and asked if they wanted to take a hike to settle their turkey. They did, so we hopped into the car and drove to Raven street, which I had been told was the nearest point to look for the quarry.

We came to the railroad bed, and not having been over it since the railroad closed, we drove onto it and headed for the Green. It is not a bad road although one-way traffic is all it will accommodate. We went through to the Green station site and turned around and drove back to the Waterville site. Then we left the car on a woods road and struck off into the woods. We found two old cellar holes of some houses that disappeared long ago. As it was quite wet and getting darker we gave up the search.

I wanted to find the place, however, so I went back to my neighbor and tried to get better directions. He seemed to remember two quartz boulders in the area, so we had a little more to go on. The following Saturday morning we went back, found the white boulders, but didn't find the millstone. After dinner we went back to search; this time we went through the woods road until we came out on Plympton street next to Ed Korpienen's. Going back a couple hundred yards we saw the white boulders and took off into the woods again; we finally located the spot.

The clearing has grown up considerably but the stone I was looking for was pretty much in view. Evidently some one had started to cut a millstone out of the solid rock. A perfect circle is cut on the top of the stone and over half way round it is cut to a depth of twelve to fifteen inches. A stone wall or what is left of it runs off to the south and there are many stones on it that look like they had been broken up where the wheels were cut. Possibly the wheels were used in the old grist mill at Muttock.

After taking a few snapshots of the big stone, we went back to the car tired but with a feeling of having rediscovered a spot which may possibly have connection with the history of Middleborough.

◆

Editor's Note

According to Weston's **History of the Town of Middleborough,** George Danson lived on Thompson road near Danson Brook. He was an original purchaser in the Sixteen Shilling Purchase, and he was a member of the Twenty-six Men's Purchase. It is believed that he is the one who carved the unfinished millstone that Mr. Butler wrote about; however, the Town history does not verify this.

In 1675 when King Philip's War broke out, families in the Thompson street area and people in other isolated sections of town sought shelter in garrisons after burying their valuables. John Tomson and Jabez Soule tried to persuade Danson to seek shelter with them, but he refused, not believing the Indians were dangerous. The next day he was found dead, and everything had been destroyed. That George Danson was killed by an Indian arrow is probably the reason the millstone remains unfinished almost three hundred years after it was started.

MUSEUM NEWS

As usual the activities at the Museum during the past few months have slowed down to a snail's pace. The Antiquarian has stimulated a little interest, however, and a few gifts of money, old documents, and antiques have been trickling in.

In an envelope of old papers given to us by Mrs. Grace Tweedy are several deeds which pertain to land and houses on Jackson street. These are especially interesting to us, although it is not certain whether the houses mentioned are our museum buildings.

The oldest deed is dated 1849. For $100 Joshua Eddy sold part of a house and lot to Mary E. Sherman of Middleborough. She bought "all the westerly part of a house and Lot in which said Sherman now lives and was conveyed to me by Peter H. Peirce." It goes on to say, "the said westerly half of said place and Lot by this Deed is intended to be conveyed is described by a line drawn through the middle of said house midway of the chimney."

It is a well-known fact that the houses on Jackson street were each built to house several families of mill workers. Because the dwellings were built by the Peirce family and because the Peirce trustees had control of the buildings until recently, it is a popular misconception that the buildings were never owned by anyone except Peirces. These deeds prove that wrong, though.

Joshua Eddy also sold part of a house and lot to William L. Lincoln, who later sold the same to Francis Sherman in 1858. This lot, containing half of a house, "measuring thurty feet on said Street thence running northeasterly one hundred and forty three feet to a stone wall in the line of P. H. Peirces land," sounds very much like a description of the western end of the first museum building.

In 1866 Mary E. Sherman sold her half of the house and lot to Francis Sherman for one hundred dollars, which is exactly what she paid for it when she bought it from Joshua Eddy. Francis Sherman now owned the whole house and its lot.

Also among the papers given to the museum by Mrs. Tweedy are two old bills of sale. In the first, dated 1832, Jabez Sherman, Jr., of Middleborough, who was a hatter, sold for $750 to another Jabez Sherman (of Carver) the following: "Two Hundred Hats, of the value of Five Hundred Dollars, and a small quantity of hatting furs & other stock for hatting valued at $50 now lying & being in my two Hat shops, the One being in sd. Carver & the other in Middleborough."

The second bill of sale was signed on the first day of April in 1835. In it Jabez, Jr., makes a sale to the other Jabez Sherman, who now lives in Middleborough. For $470 Jabez, Jr., sells "one hundred & forty napt (?) hats . . . of the value of three hundred & fifty dollars, also fifty hat bodies of the value of twenty five dollars—also one hundred mink-cut (?) & mink skins, of the value of twenty five dollars—one copper colouring kettle, of the value of forty dollars—two lead kettles of the value of thirty dollars, all of the value of four hundred and seventy dollars."

The only mention in the Town history of hat making is in reference to the Bay State Straw Works. It seems strange that nothing is said about the Shermans. Seven hundred and fifty dollars was a lot of money in 1832, and it seems that the Sherman hat shops must have been quite large establishments to command such a price back then. It is our hope that other papers—letters, deeds, or bills—will turn up which might give us some idea as to the location of the Middleborough hat shop.

We are always looking for old deeds and papers like those Mrs. Tweedy gave us. It's not only interesting, but educational to be able to look into the past by way of these papers. We'd like to remind you that these documents aren't just thrown in a file drawer and forgotten. They are available to anyone who is interested in reading or cataloging them. As soon as it is warm enough to open the museum, come in and take a look into our manuscript files.

FALL BROOK — ROCK — SOUTH MIDDLEBORO

During the last fifteen or twenty years there seems to have arisen some confusion among people not living in the southern part of the town of Middleborough that all of this area is South Middleborough. To correct this misunderstanding I give the following facts: The first neighborhood one comes to upon leaving Middleborough center, going south, is Fall Brook. That may be estimated as two and a half miles from the four corners. The next village, which is now largely residential, is Rock. This is approximately five miles from the center. Three miles further south is South Middleborough where Lucy Braley's Candy Kitchen, Williams' Trading Post, The Country Store, a diner, and a little further on, the South Middleboro Methodist Church are located.

There is also, to the South of Rock, and between there and South Middleborough, the area formerly known to everyone as the Highlands. It was here that Dr. James F. Shurtleff lived, the subject of a former sketch in The Antiquarian, Vol. IV, No. 1. Each of these neighborhoods in former years, before the transportation of children here and there to school, had their own district schools, each with its own number. Also, out of South Middleborough, toward South Carver, was the neighborhood known as France, which is still called the France neighborhood. This, also, had its own district school until pupils could be transported to Middleborough center.

The dwelling mentioned in the last issue of the **Antiquarian** is on Highland street, and at the time it was built, apparently in the early 1700's, would have stood in what was then the center of Rock. Before the coming of the railroad the community centered around the church. The cemetery in front of the present Memorial Chapel was a training ground for the soldiers during the Revolutionary War.

Susan B. Brackett

STORE CLOSES

The closing of MacNeil's dry goods store on Center street is a cause for nostalgia to some who have grown up from childhood to think of that location as permanent. Some remember the founder, George T. Ryder, a portly, pleasant-faced gentleman with business faculty. In time the business passed on to his son, the late Jesse B. Ryder, who carried on in the same way as his father. A nephew, the late Alonzo Ryder, was a head clerk, who knew all the ins and outs of the trade to keep things humming in the absence of the proprietor. The late Amasa Glidden, who later started a store of his own, had his experience there. The late Sarah Barden and Mary Thresher were also clerks.

The departments were all on one floor, with counters within speaking distance so there was a sort of comradeship among the clerks. The hours were long; the store was open every day except Sunday and every evening until 9 o'clock except Monday, when that was a night off. Saturday nights the show cases and counters were put to bed under heavy canvas coverings for a rest until Monday morning.

The store was not averse to employing young clerks, high school graduates with no experience. The pay started at $4.50 weekly for the long hours. There were no Social Security, unemployment or union dues, so the whole sum was in the pay envelope. Experience led eventually to a raise, but considering the numberless items, small wares, etc., there was a lot to learn for a new clerk.

Changes have been made in the course of time. The Ryder family retired and passed out of the picture.

Fred N. Whitman became the next proprietor and continued for several years, while progress was on the march and expansion a necessity. He was followed by a successor, who has now retired, and the store, which was known as MacNeil's for a period of time, (to contemporary citizens of earlier days the name "Ryder's store" has remained regardless of change of proprietors) has closed.

Jennie P. Hayden

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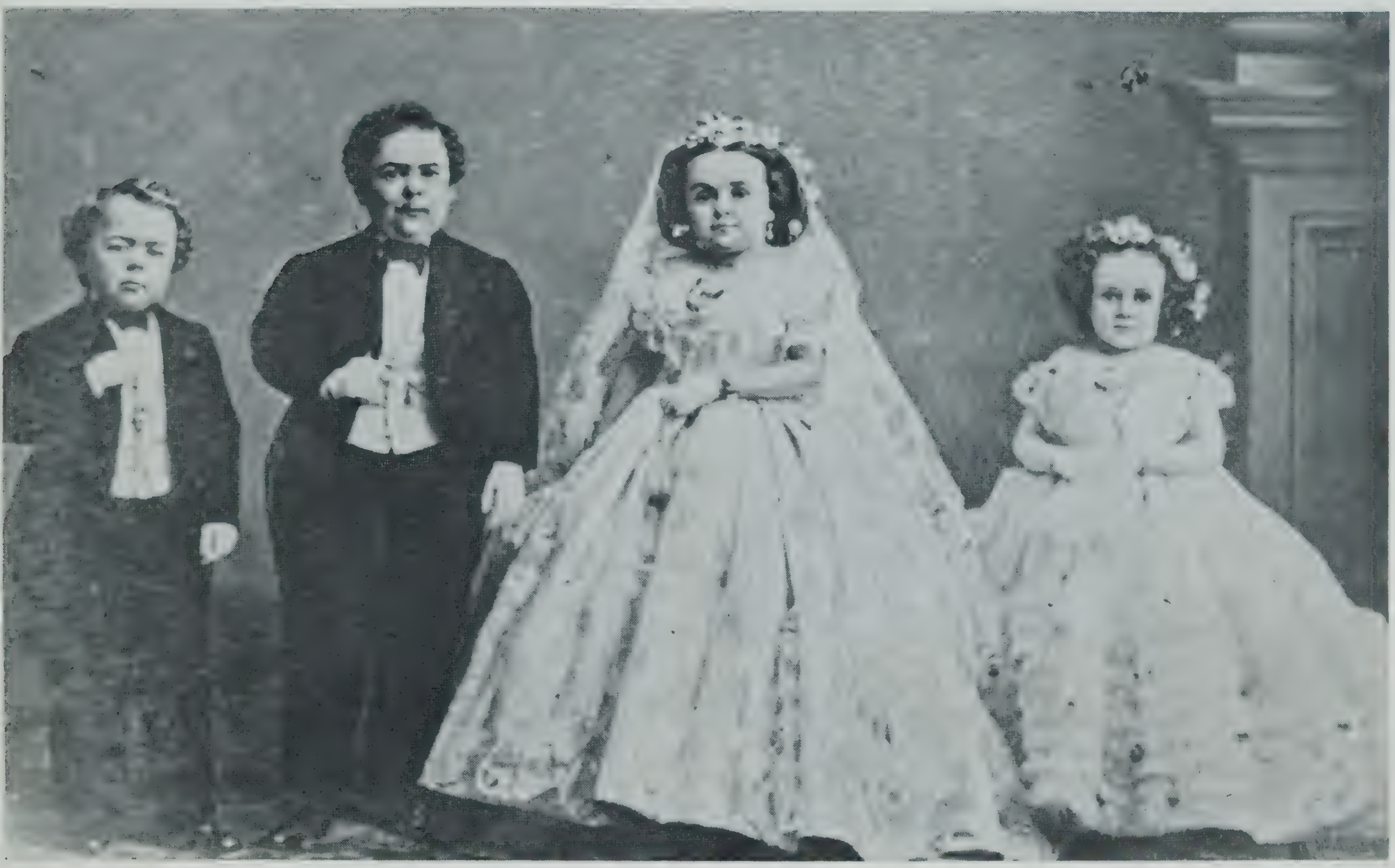

MIDDLEBORO'S FAMOUS "LITTLE PEOPLE"

Perhaps Middleboro's chief claim to fame is the fact that this was the birthplace of Mrs. Tom Thumb. Surely no native son or daughter achieved the world-wide fame accorded to Mrs. Tom Thumb, nee Lavinia Warren.

The most frequently asked question about Lavinia and her sister Minnie is, "Why did they appear under the name of Warren instead of Bump, their parent's name?" P. T. Barnum, who discovered Lavinia and later Minnie, did not fancy the name of Bump for show purposes, so he persuaded the girls to adopt their mother's maiden name of Warren.

Lavinia was not born in the large house on the corner of Summer and Plymouth Streets as commonly supposed, but in a small cottage on Plymouth Street to the left of the large house. Later Mr. and Mrs. Bump and their six children—two tiny midget-girls and four six-foot boys—moved into the house generally known as the Bump house.

Lavinia was born on October 31, 1841. She was a very intelligent little girl, a leader among her friends in the Warrentown section of the town and for a time taught a private school in her home. When she was sixteen years old she received a visitor, a gentleman who came with the suggestion she join his traveling company. At first the mother and father were strongly opposed to such a proposition, but when they were assured Lavinia would always be accompanied by a chaperone, they gave their consent. Lavinia's first public appearance was in St. Louis where she appeared with a company giving shows on the great flatboats, the Show Boats, plying up and down the Mississippi River.

After spending four years in this kind of work, Lavinia returned to her home in Middleboro where she was engaged to teach in the country school she attended in her youth. She was thus employed when P. T. Barnum, the great showman, heard about her and lost no time in traveling to Middleboro to investigate the possibilities of engaging her to appear at his American Museum in New York. Again the parents demurred, but Mr. Barnum soon won their consent and a contract was signed, after which Lavinia accompanied Mr. Barnum to New York to purchase costumes and jewelry for her debut at the Museum. Thus began Lavinia's career which was to take her all over the world and before all the crowned heads of Europe.

Also at the Museum were appearing two other little midgets, General Tom Thumb and Commodore Nutt. Mr. Barnum had discovered little Charles Stratton in Bridgeport, Connecticut, in 1842. He had heard of this tiny child who, at the age of four was only about twenty-eight inches high but with an unusually brilliant mind. Arrangements were made with Mr. and Mrs. Stratton for the child to appear at the American Museum at three dollars a week for four weeks. Mr. Barnum immediately dubbed him, "General Tom Thumb," a title which was to attract thousands to his American Museum. The con-

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tract was renewed for seven dollars a week, which was the beginning of what became a fortune for General Tom Thumb and proved to be the most lucrative venture of Mr. Barnum's entire business career.

Commodore Nutt was a midget Mr. Barnum found in Manchester, New Hampshire. With Minnie, Lavinia's younger sister who joined the group as soon as she was old enough, the four little people formed a quartet and presented little skits and plays, first at the Museum and later all over the world.

The story of the rivalry between Tom Thumb and Commodore Nutt is well known. Once Lavinia gave the Commodore a friendship ring, but he was sure it had a deeper meaning. By this time Tom Thumb had fallen in love with Lavinia and persuaded P. T. Barnum to invite her for a week-end at Barnum's luxurious estate in Bridgeport, "Iranistan." The invitation was given and accepted, but Barnum was perturbed to find that the Commodore was also coming to Bridgeport that week-end, ostensibly to see his ponies which he kept there.

The Commodore was delayed in arriving, and, making the most of this advantage, the General suggested that he be invited to spend the night at "Iranistan." After dinner he put forth the suggestion that he and Lavinia sit up and wait for Commodore Nutt. The Barnums retired and left the two alone. At a propitious moment, the General proposed, but Lavinia said she would not marry anyone without her mother's consent, which might not be easy to obtain.

Just then there was a great stamping and commotion on the porch and Commodore Nutt burst into the room. He did not expect to find the General there at that hour and was much annoyed. He rushed upstairs to Barnum's room and demanded to know if Tom Thumb lived there. Just as he was making his exit, Tom Thumb rushed into the room shouting in glee, "She said yes! We're engaged! We're engaged!"

Mrs. Bump's consent was given, although she did not approve of the General and especially disliked his mustache. On February 10, 1863, just one hundred years ago, the famous Fairy Wedding took place in Grace Church, New York.

News of the Civil War had filled the front pages of the newspapers, but now war news was relegated to back pages while facts about the Fairy Wedding took over the front page. Rev. Israel W. Putnam of the First Congregational Church of Middleboro, where Lavinia and her family attended church, assisted at the ceremony. At first Commodore Nutt in his jealously refused to serve as best man, but was finally persuaded, and Lavinia's sister Minnie was bridesmaid.

After the wedding a great reception for two thousand people was held at the Metropolitan Hotel. It was all the wedding principals and their families could do to dissuade Barnum from charging admission to the wedding and reception. He hated to forego such a wonderful opportunity to make money. At the reception the four little people stood on the grand piano to receive their guests. Many thought the next wedding might be that of Commodore Nutt and Minnie Warren, but that was never to be. The Commodore remained a bachelor, saying he could never love again, and Minnie married a Major Newell.

The list of wedding presents was an imposing one. There is a tiny silver coach and pony in the Tom Thumb Room of the Middleborough Historical Museum which is said to be the wedding gift of the jewelry firm of Tiffany's. Originally it was set with precious gems, but in later years when their fortune was gone and money needed for expenses, the gems were removed and sold and imitation stones substituted. An elaborately carved billiard table, gift of the manufacturers, is in the Ford Museum at Dearborn, Michigan. A little sewing machine twenty-six inches in height was the gift of Wheeler & Wilson, the manufacturers. President and Mrs. Lincoln sent a Chinese fire screen of gold, silver, and pearl. Pieces of the wedding-cake, in tiny white boxes, were treasured possessions of many Middleboro families.

After the honeymoon, the pair embarked upon their life of travel which was to take them to the far corners of the earth. The first trip was a fairly brief European tour, but on June 21, 1869, General Tom Thumb and Company left on a tour which took them across the United States, to China, Japan, Australia, Arabia, India, and Europe. Travel was not easy in those days and many were the hazardous and dangerous adventures they endured. Despite a trip of more than 55,000 miles and 1,471 performances, not one engagement did the little people miss because of illness or accident.

It was at the height of their success that they built their house in the Warrentown section of Middleboro across the street from the Bump family home. Everything was built to scale for the comfort and convenience of tenants only a yard high. The windows were low, the stairs had small risers, there was a tiny cookstove, and the house was furnished with the diminutive furniture and gifts that had been lavished upon them by royalty and friends the world over.

Mrs. Tom Thumb suffered a grievous loss in the death of her beloved sister Minnie, who died at childbirth when she was twenty-one years old. There are clippings from newspapers of the year 1878 which tell of Minnie's funeral. Lying in the coffin together, Minnie and her baby looked like a little girl with her doll. She is buried in a tiny grave marked with granite curbstones in Nemasket Hill Cemetery, Middleboro.

In 1883, General Tom Thumb died at the Bump residence in Middleboro. While the troupe was in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a fire broke out in the middle of the night in the hotel in which they were staying. The General never recovered from the shock of this experience and died of apoplexy on July 15, 1883. He was buried in Mountain Grove Cemetery, Bridgeport.

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Mrs. Tom Thumb continued to travel in show business. In the troupe were two midgets from Bologna, Italy, Count Primo Magri and his brother, Baron Ernest Magri. Count Magri became Mrs. Tom Thumb's second husband on Easter Monday, April 6, 1885.

The discomforts of travel were becoming too arduous for the Countess and the two Magri brothers and they now retired to Lavinia's family home in Middleboro. They built a little refreshment stand next to the home, called "Primo's Pastime," and scores of people stopped, not so much for refreshment, as to see and engage in conversation with the famous Mrs. Tom Thumb.

Lavinia died in Middleboro on November 25, 1919, in her seventy-eighth year and was buried beside her first husband in Bridgeport, Connecticut. The following year Count Magri, wishing to return to his native Italy, held an auction of the pitifully few possessions left. On October 13, 14, and 15, 1920, the auction was conducted at the homestead by Mr. William Egger. Mr. Elmer Drew, then in the antique business, was one of the heaviest bidders. The Count did not live to realize his ambition to once more visit Italy, but died soon after the auction and is buried in St. Mary's Cemetery, Middleboro.

It was at this time that Mr. Egger took possession of the large oil portraits which are to be seen in the Middleboro Public Library. It is said that these are photographs blown up to life size and painted in oil. Anxious to preserve the portraits for Middleboro, Mr. Egger asked for public donations to have them restored. Mrs. J. Herbert Cushing restored the portraits and the frames, both of which were in sad disrepair.

In 1930, after both the Count and Baron had died and the Bump homestead was about to be sold, another auction was held of the few articles remaining in the home. There was small demand and prices were low. A little brass bed with four brass rods forming a canopy topped by a crown, brought no bids at all.

It is forever to be regretted that there was not enough public interest to keep the many unique and valuable possessions of the Tom Thumbs in Middleboro. They have been scattered far and wide. Sutro's of Cliff House, San Francisco, has the largest collection. In this Museum are to be seen the two little coaches which were used in parades, drawn by Shetland ponies with a miniature coachman in the driver's seat. One is a black coach upholstered in red in which the General and his wife rode, the second is the "Walnut Coach," the body gilded and shaped like a walnut shell and in this very appropriately rode Commodore Nutt. This little coach used to be re-painted annually at the A. J. Bailey Carriage Shop in Middleboro while the little people were resting for the summer.

The tiny grand piano is in Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. Ford Museum at Dearborn, Michigan, has another black coach owned by the University of New Hampshire and loaned to the Museum. Here also is the elaborately carved billiard table which was a wedding present, and a tricycle ridden by Tom Thumb. The Circus Museum in Sarasota has other articles.

The Middleborough Historical Museum considers itself fortunate to have a sizable collection of Tom Thum memorabilia, gathered together in a room set aside as "The Tom Thumb Room." When the Museum was in its embryo state, when there was just a possibility of there being such an institution, some of those most interested learned that Mrs. Tom Thumb's nephew, Benjamin Bump, was intending to sell what remained in his possession of the Tom Thumb effects. It seemed this would be an invaluable addition to our Historical Museum. The collection was purchased for $3000.00 and the newly-formed Museum Committee assumed the responsibility of raising that sum to be paid in installments. The money was borrowed and is not quite, but almost, paid.

Ever since the Museum opened its doors and it became known that it contained a Tom Thumb room, gifts have been constantly and gratefully received. Many photographs have been given as well as many other interesting items such as tiny garments, Mrs. Tom Thumb's circus trunk, her tiny calling card, Tom Thumb's hunting suit, and his smoking set. Because Count Magri was for many years associated with Middleboro and a familiar figure on the streets, there are many articles and pictures pertaining to him, including the bicycle he rode, his xylophone and flute and some of the costumes he wore in his stage skits.

As is so with many people of diminutive proportions, there was nothing repulsive about Mrs. Tom Thumb or her husband. Their form was symmetrical, attractive, and a perfect physical development in miniature. Lavinia had a pretty, round, dimpled face and sparkling eyes. Both she and the General were clever conversationalists and always ready with repartee. There have been many midgets as small as General and Mrs. Tom Thumb, but never any as famous.

Mertie E. Witbeck

MUSEUM NEWS

The Sproat Tavern outhouse is at last nestled between our two weeping willows in what used to be the old garden behind our two museum buildings. Proper restoration of this plaster and wainscot walled five holer that served the tavern during most of 19th century has been put off on account of completion of the G.A.R. exhibit, the blacksmith shop, and the weaving room. There have been too many jokes about that rubber, stretchable dollar, but no matter how much you joke you just can't make them cover the ground they used to. Even Chick Sales didn't design many with two four-pane sash flanking a four-paneled door. Don't miss it when you visit us — you'll never see another like it.

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The Ralph Nickerson collection of Indian artifacts presented to us by his Widow (recently exhibited in the window of the Middleborough Trust Company's Loan Department branch on South Main street) will be at last on exhibit in its own room in the corner building. As Dr. Maurice Robbins of the Massachusetts Archeological Society pointed out when Mrs. Nickerson offered it, this collection is entirely local. From the poorest arrowhead to the most delicately fashioned drill, every piece was made and used by American Indians who lived and died in the Middleborough-Lakeville area. As you examine an axe or a plumet, a knife or a drill, you can imagine that the original American who made it **might** have shot one of your ancestors — or, smoked the pipe of peace with him.

The blacksmith shop (which we hope will be housed in a building resembling the Lincoln or Cosseboom establishments of the last century at a later date) is being set up in the basement where one of our chimneys will supply the atmosphere and background. Like the Nickerson collection, from the anvil and bellows to the forge and tools, this exhibit is of local extraction. The anvil and some of the tools were used by George Delmar Dorr in the shop next to the old Dorr place in North Middleborough on Bedford street. It was given to the museum by Mr. and Mrs. Leon Townsend. The bellows came from what oldest memories recall as Pratt's Boarding House at the corner of Pleasant and Clay streets. On the 1855 Walling map of Middleborough, a small dot at this corner of Pleasant and Clay bears the name David Alden. It seems reasonable to guess that they were used on an Alden farm during the first part of the 19th century. Standing five feet on its hand-wrought iron nose, it comes to us through the thoughtfulness of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hiltz of Lakeville. The forge itself, though of a later vintage, was presented by Foster and Steve Jackson, who now run the old Cosseboom shop. Years ago Mr. Lincoln gave me some of the tools though he never lived to see them in the Middleborough Historical Museum.

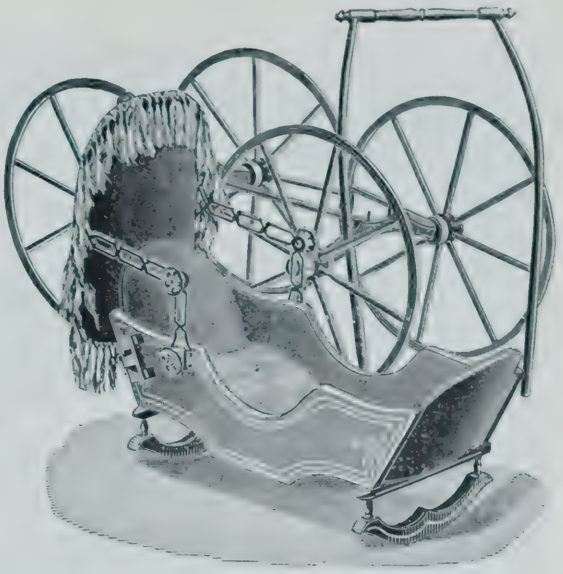
The G.A.R. Gun Room has been finished and supplements our Civil War exhibit, adding historical material previously stored "aloft" and now available to the public.

The Gay Ninety kitchen in the room next to the Nickerson Collection exhibit makes an interesting mate for the old kitchen in the basement in our other building. Basement kitchens were common in the South during both 18th and 19th centuries where slaves prepared the food and the smells of cooking and preparation were spared the ladies and gentlemen of the old plantations. I think we are safe in saying that there were few in New England. It is an interesting note that two mill houses should have been built side by side on the same street about 1825, one with two basement kitchens, and the other two more generally accepted kitchens in the rear on the ground floor.

The Weaving Room, or Textile Room, is finished at long last. In this exhibit we have tried to trace the manufacture of cloth from about 1700 to 1850 — from the ca. 1725 oak loom loaned by Hells Blazes Tavern and the early 18th century hatchels to the middy-noddies and spinning and flax wheels. This exhibit should prove not only educational but entertaining and interesting.

We have also recently acquired eight or ten very old and unusual bonnet molds which have been added to our Straw Shop collection. They were given to us by Mr. and Mrs. Norman Massey of Thompson street.

There's more news but, as usual, no more space. We'll keep you up to date in the next volume. P.S. The Tom Thumb Collection is seldom mentioned, but believe us, it is not static by any means. Of all the exhibits and collections, this one grows and grows every week. The very latest only yesterday came through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Sullivan from Judge Sullivan's estate — Lavinia's leather sewing kit, her gold specs, and a silver cigarette case given to Count Magri by The Ladies of Dublin in 1887. We haven't one of the small coaches, but we do have one of the best collections in New England — as is fitting and proper for Lavinia's old home town.



VALLEY FARM—SOULE NEIGHBORHOOD

There is a short lane off Cedar street in East Middleborough (between the home of Mrs. William Kelley and that of the late Edwin E. Soule) where there are tumbled down buildings and traces of what at one time was a thriving business. The remains of an incubator cellar would tell one that it was the site of a poultry business perhaps, but it would be difficult for one who didn't know the history to visualize the large duck farm that was operated on those eight acres of land. It is now all grown up to scrub oak, pine, and maple with a slight clearing through the center part of the acreage.

In 1899 my father, Charles H. Soule, bought the James Soule homestead from his son Horace. With this property were eight acres of woodland, which my father cleared for duck raising. He had already made a good start in the business at his father's homestead, the red brick house of Orlando Soule, also on Cedar street.

There was a blacksmith shop on the James Soule place, which was moved across the street and down the lane to be used for a grain shed and picking house. Later a larger building was added on top of which was a large tank holding hundreds of gallons of water to be used all through the farm. A windmill arrangement was first used for pumping water, but sometimes water had to be pumped by hand to supplement that amount. Later a gasoline engine and an artesian well were installed.

Water was provided for the ducks through a pipe system laid all through the farm with a faucet arrangement in each pen through which the water was turned on three times each day to fill the troughs. A large horse-drawn low cart was the feeding vehicle. Several hundred pounds of ground grains and meat plus chopped cornstalks or cooked mangle beets were mixed with water and hand-mixed with a shovel and taken in the cart to be shovelled out to each pen three times each day.

Grain was bought by the carload and delivered at the East Middleborough Railroad Station. Grain was also delivered twice a week from local grain merchants in large grain trucks drawn by four horses. Mangle beets were bought by the ton from the Bridgewater State Farm and cooked in a huge iron vat. Field corn, raised on the farm, was cut while young and fed through a corn cutter to cut pieces about an inch long. These two ingredients provided the green in the feed which the ducks needed.

Each summer my father raised and marketed from 12,000 to 15,000 ducks, shipping them by express each day from the East Middleborough Station to Boston. James D. Legg, Thorndike & Gerrish, and Adams & Chapman were some of the markets in Boston with whom he did business.

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THE MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleborough, Mass.
June, 1963
July, 1963
Volume V Number III

Lawrence B. Romaine
Richard S. Tripp } Editors

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Three to four pickers were employed all through the picking season. After picking, the ducks were placed in large barrels with plenty of ice, and early the following morning they were packed for market. The poultry arrived in Boston for market the morning after it was dressed.

To perpetuate the stock from year to year, three hundred breeders were kept over through the winter months, from which eggs were hatched in the incubator cellar. At first the hatching was done in small Cyphers machines operated by kerosene. Later two Candee machines were installed, each of ten thousand egg capacity. These were coal operated machines. Custom hatching was done as well as hatching for the farm.

My father continued in the duck raising business in a large way until about 1916 or 1917. Around that time prices were not good and the profit was less. He had always raised a few hens, marketed them, and sold eggs for market; he now continued this in a larger way on the farm. He also started experimenting with the raising of turkeys, and he was one of the first to try raising them on wire to avoid the black-head disease which made turkey raising very difficult. The turkey raising grew until the early forties when my father retired. He will be remembered by many as supplying the traditional bird for Thanksgiving and Christmas festivities.

In the early 1900's the Soule neighborhood was a prosperous farming community. Almost every family was in some kind of business for themselves. A few were Charles Soule's duck farm, Augustus Soule and Albert Deane's dairy farm, and Washburn & Soule's box mill. These were the three large industries in that area at that time.

Alberta N. Soule

HELP WANTED

1. Can't someone help us to run down further letters, documents or printed data about Marcus Maxim's nail making machine? (Antiquarian, Vol. V, No. 1, page 7).

2. Who remembers Johnson Brothers Furniture Co. on North Main street? Let us know the location and when they operated. We have a gorgeous advertising fan from the Harlows.

3. We have some fine detailed letters from Placerville, California written in 1877 to Miss Francis King of Middleboro. They concern a Mr. Perkins and some land bequeathed to the writer, Mr. Shelley Inch. Has anyone any Middleboro Gazettes for September to November 1877?

4. Gove & Bailey manufactured a toy called 'The Open Door' of which we have one poor busted sample. The story is that the storehouse with these toys burned down years ago. Hasn't anyone a good working one in the attic?

5. In the Pierce Store we have a card that reads: William F. Keyes, Box 394, Middleboro, Mass. — The New Party Wagon is now ready. May be engaged for picnics, balls and all other entertainments. Parties carred to all points at reasonable rates. WHEN?

6. Who remembers buying pills and liniment at Drakes Drug Store on North Main st.? Did the marble stone on the museum lawn on Jackson street sit on the curb as a carriage step — or what?

7. Did you every buy flowers at Keyes Brothers—Florists, opposite the Central Cemetery? When, and when did they go out of business?

Editor's note: Shall we just have these pieces for visitors to gawk at — or shall we find their history and label them properly for the future?

A HAPPY DAY FOR THE BLUE AND THE GRAY

By
Clint Clark

Many of us remember Memorial Day parades that included the last of the town's veterans of the Civil War and some recall the old G.A.R. Hall and former Peirce Academy, which was, unfortunately, razed in the 30's to make way for a new post office.

Today, most of the memorabilia of that great conflict which has been saved, is on view at the Jackson Street Historical Museums. But, for first-hand accounts, from the memories of the few veterans remaining during the first part of the century, The Gazette files are an excellent source of material.

Probably one of the most moving accounts was published as a report of the Middleboro veterans who attended a grand peace jubilee at Gettysburg in 1913. There were 13 members of E. W. Peirce Post 8, G.A.R. and another local veteran by the name of Martin Hanley.

They were among the Massachusetts division, 2,000 strong, which marched with the Norwood band into the encampment of Johnny Rebs at Gettysburg on a peaceful and nostalgic invasion one night during the jubilee celebration. With much hand shaking and many warm embraces the Blue and the Gray sealed anew their pledge of one country, one flag, and the Union forever!

The Middleboro men visited the National cemetery, saw where nearly 4,000 brave men of both sides lie buried and recalled President Lincoln's immortal speech. And where the Blue and the Gray had met in deadly conflict 50 years before, the aging veterans reminisced and pointed out to one another various salient points in the great battle that was the crest and beginning of the ebb tide for the Confederacy. And there were solemn moments as a veteran located a spot where his comrades were cut down and knelt in prayer. One local man, Edgar D. Wood, found the exact spot where he stood by a stone wall as the gray tide of soldiers surged towards the crest of the hill and failed in the assault at the spot today called the High Water Mark.

An interesting, yet poignant episode was witnessed by the Middleboro veterans on the last day of the encampment. The survivors of Pickett's mighty and futile charge, a pitiful 75 out of the thousands that crossed the wheat field a half century before, re-enacted the charge. Starting from Seminary Ridge, as they had in 1863, they charged, with less vigor and ferocity, right up to Cemetery Ridge to the stone wall where they were repulsed. They were received this time by a like number of Union soldiers, and shook hands amidst the cheers of thousands witnessing the never-to-be-forgotten scene. Where 50 years before they had been met with bullets and an almost solid wall of canister shot, this time it was with a hearty handshake and a heartfelt "God bless you."

Attending that peace jubilee from the Middleboro post were: Commander Thompson Perkins, Adjutant William McAllister, Quartermaster Charles L. Starkey, Patriotic Instructor Edgar L. Wood, and Comrades Grover Bennett, Ezra Morse, Solon Robertson, Walter H. Smith, Benjamin W. Bump, John Dean, Edward S. Westgate, George R. Deane of New Bedford, and Henry K. Ellis of Wollaston.

JUDGE PETER OLIVER'S IRONWORKS

A Preliminary Report

May 1963

by

Frederick E. Eayrs, Jr.

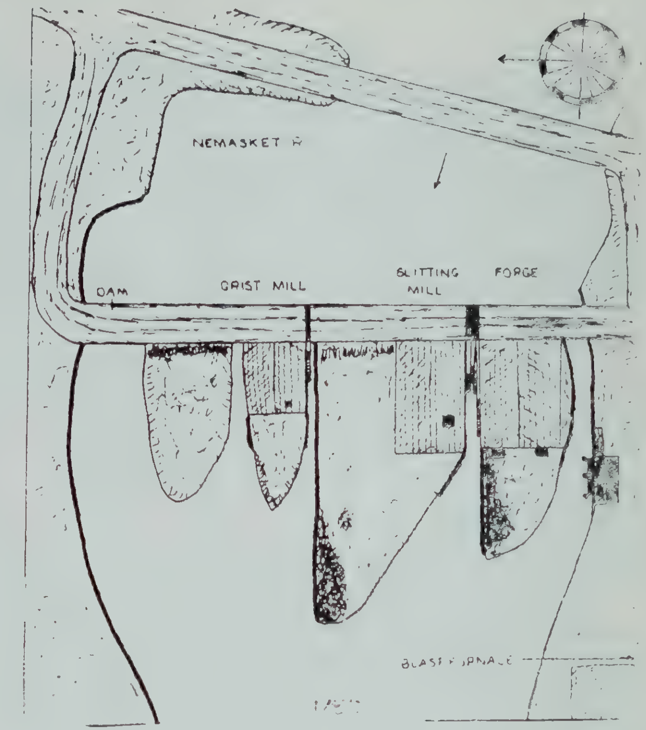
The art of iron manufacture was one of the most precious employed by the colonists. With iron they cooked their food, built their homes, defended themselves and planted their gardens. The ancient art of blast furnace technique has been replaced by modern, more efficient methods of foundry practice, but the older sites still remain, a tribute to the early settler and his Yankee ingenuity.

Judge Peter Oliver's Ironworks on the Nemasket River at Muttock in Middleborough was an outstanding example. This furnace and foundry produced many cannon for the British Navy, as well as shot, shell, weights, howitzers, nails and machine parts for the Crown. I have prepared the following report of Muttock history and the ancient process of iron smelting as applied to Judge Oliver's Ironworks.

Peter Oliver graduated from Harvard College in 1737 and shortly after (1744) settled in Middleborough. He became respected and successful throughout the province and especially in his own community. Oliver was a prosperous and prudent farmer as well as a dealer in real estate. He purchased the land and water privileges about Muttock with the grist mill erected here at an earlier date. The Judge was respected as the authority in matters of state by the citizens of the town. When asked if the Sovereign King George III had done right, he answered, "As to that I can not say, but he has the power."

Immediately after settling in Middleborough the Judge built Oliver Hall, considered one of the finest country residences outside of Boston. It was located on a high plain overlooking the Nemasket River, a magnificent example of the English mansion of the period. The entrance drive was lined with stately trees. The Hall was well known through the Colony and was a favorite retreat for high ranking nobility. Judge Sewall and John Adams wrote of the beauty of the estate and their good times there.

In 1747 Peter Oliver was appointed Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, and in 1756, Judge of the Superior Court of Justicature, the highest court in the Province. In 1762 he became Chief Justice. At this time Oliver was second only to the Governor of the Commonwealth, Thomas Hutchinson. His most noteworthy trial was the famous case of the Boston Massacre on King street in 1770.



Peter Oliver, Jr., also graduated from Harvard as a lawyer but did not practice in Middleborough. In 1770 he married Mistress Sarah Hutchinson, and commented on the occasion "Thus ended the happiest time of my life." This speaks well for Sarah. Judge Oliver built a home for them on a plain across the river from Oliver Hall which still stands today, restored a treasured by the late Mr. Peter Oliver and Mrs. Oliver. Gove nor Hutchinson was accustomed to spend the summer with his daughter and gave the house the name The Summer House. Here Dr. Oliver often entertained James Bowdoin, Governor of the Commonwealth, Benjamin Franklin and other famous men of the period.

When the inevitable revolution broke out at Lexington and Concord, the Olivers' non-violent, loyalistic attitude made them obnoxious to the Patriots. When Chief Justice Oliver was impeached for receiving a salary from the Crown, and public sentiment became too severe, they found seclusion in Boston, never to return to Middleborough again. Peter Oliver sailed for England and there spent the rest of his life. In the early winter of 1778 when Washington and his little army was suffering at Valley Forge, the Middleborough Patriots ransacked and burned Oliver Hall and its precious library. The foundation has been plowed in and all traces of the grand old Hall have been destroyed forever.

During the 17th century Middleborough was one of the largest towns in the province. In 1744 Oliver began constructing a forge and slitting mill on the river. A blast furnace was built on a neck of land extending into the stream. (See Plate 1)

Being in good favor with the Crown, Oliver was able to secure large military contracts. The Navigation Acts made production of public stores impossible, but military articles could be manufactured anywhere under Crown authority. The wealth in this community alone made the judge's works the most enterprising in the province. Because Crown contracts were scarce, other furnaces were insignificant, but during the Revolution th confiscated Oliver plant met with stiff competition from five other furnaces.

Blast furnace operation was a large business after the Revolution. The Navigation Act starved colonists were hungry for ladles, kettles, weights, firebacks, pots, knives, axes, nails and utensils of all kinds. All articles were produced in large quantities and sold to stores all over the country. The works were financed by the stockholders, and the business department con-

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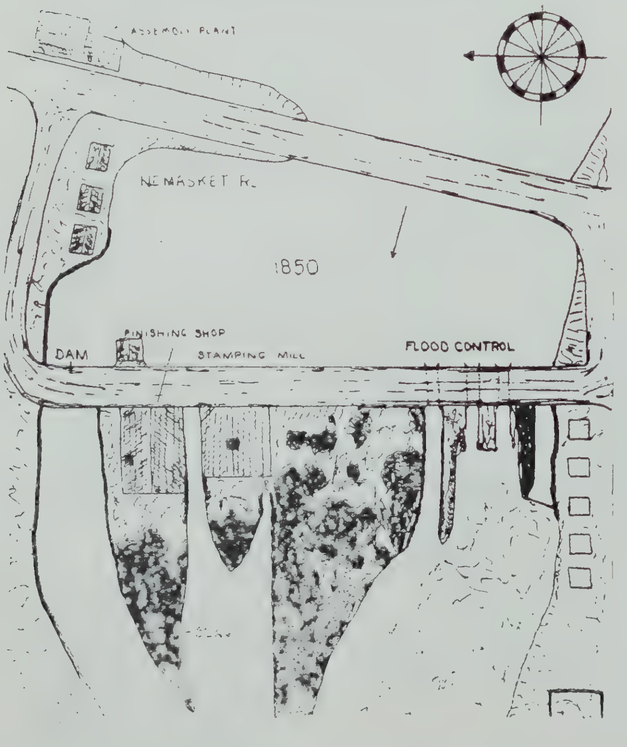
trolled operations by collecting raw materials. Finished products were sold by salemen to stores but could also be purchased at the furnace. Many Middleborough citizens made extra money by gathering sea shells and selling them to the furnace. Pounds, shillings and pence continued in all accounting after the Revolution as they had during colonial days. Shares in the works were bought and sold and traded, to wit:—

To James Bowdoin
August 20, 1744 1/66 of the slitting mill, utensils
forge, gristmill and the dam across the Nemasket.

There were four processes employed in iron manufacture in the Oliver foundry: smelting, refining, rolling and slitting. In the blast furnace a mixture of fuel (charcoal was the principal fuel), a fluxing agent (limestone or shells), and iron ore (bog ore) were heated in a square based trapezoid with a cylindrical crucible in the center. The crucible was lined with clay to aid refraction of the hot air blast from the bellows. On one side of the furnace an area was inset almost to the crucible lining. This area had a floor of fine sand used for casting. An opening from the interior of the pear shaped crucible to the casting room was used for abstracting the molten iron. While in operation this opening was partially closed off by a baked clay block and then finally sealed in fresh clay.

When a blast started, the furnace would be charged with layers of charcoal, flux and ore until the crucible was filled, the fire lighted and the bellows put in operation, never to stop until the crucible lining burned out. The hottest point was at the level of the bellows where the air caused the most rapid burning, and at this fission level the iron was freed from its impurities and settled in the base of the crucible. The slag was freed also and formed a pool above the molten iron. As the volume of slag and iron increased, the clay seal above the hearth was broken and the slag drawn off, the furnace being designed so that the slag could be drawn without the iron. When a sufficient quantity of molten iron had been collected, the clay seal on the left of the inset block was chipped away and a stream of iron ran down a sand trough of any convenient size that hardened into bars, familiarly called "pigs." When the entire clay seal had been chipped away, the clay block was removed and the iron ladled out of a shallow pool in the hearth. This metal was moulded into kettles and other hollow ware.



Oliver's Crown sometimes called for special requirements. Cannon could not be made from linonite bog ore because it would crack when fired. Mountain or rock ore was impor from New Jersey because it was practically pure and made excellent castings. Even gun carriage wheels were attempted in 1755. Howitzers, mortars, shot, shells, firebacks and weights were also made from this magnitite ore. The average blast lasted from two to six months depending on weather conditions. When completed the furnace was torn down and rebuilt.

In the refinery forge the pigs from the blast furnace were reheated to remove impurities and to be hammered into wrought iron. The pig iron was melted and joined with slag containing silicon and manganese which was released into the air by the work of the bellows. As it disappeared it drew out the carbon in the pig iron. When judged to be as pure as possible, the slaggish ball was withdrawn and placed under a giant hammer and beaten into a bloom about 1½′ x 6′ x 6″.

At the rolling and slitting mill the blooms were rolled into flats 6′ x 3′ x ¼″, and sliced into nailrods. They were then reheated to a red heat and the bar taken in a pair of tongs and run through a set of rollers of hardened steel comparable to a clothes ringer. Because of primitive conditions the bar could only be reduced about 5% of its size in each rolling, depending on the solidity and malleability of the iron. At each subsequent rolling the upper roller could be adjusted so that any required thickness could be produced. This product was again reheated and run through two rows of iron disks which sliced the flats into rods about 6′ x ¼″ x ¼″. These rods were then sold to be swedged into nails. Local farmers swedged their own nails.

After the Revolution the works faltered. The leadership Judge Oliver had given was irreplaceable, and since most of t stockholders were Loyalists, they had left Middleborough, a the finances necessary to carry on iron production were nil.

The works fell into a sorry state of affairs until General Abiel Washburn and his son Philander took over. They dismantled the forge, slitting mill and blast furnace, and began a shovel industry that prospered well into the 19th century. As New England was almost entirely agricultural, shovels were in great demand and their production guaranteed success to the producers.

The shovel works consisted of a stamping mill, finishing shop and assembly plant. The area previously occupied by the forge was converted to a flood control center where spring waters were diverted from the flood stage. Washburn also built a saw mill down stream on the dam. At the stamping mill shovels, spades and other tools were stamped out between two hardened dies that bore impressions of the implements. A piece of hot, rough-cut flat metal was forged by repeated blows between the dies. The stamping machine consisted of four main posts, 20″ x 20″, which were based in the mill floor. Each had a groove cut out of it between which a shaft held one die, the other resting on the floor. This shaft was raised by the waterwheel, and crashed down on the other die forming the shovel or other imprint desired. These rough stamped shovels and tools were trimmed and made ready for assembly in the finishing shop. Hinges, braces and novelties were also manufactured in quantity.

Because of the two industries present at Muttock, the later has destroyed much evidence of the earlier by using its machir ery for scrap and the buildings for fuel. This situation makes ide tification of the first works almost impossible. This is a preliminary report and subject to changes through further excavation. Editor's note: We most sincerely hope the "changes" will be in the form of local support that will enable Ted Eayrs to properly restore, or at least mark, the furnaces and shops — or their foundations — on this historic site.

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ANTIQUARIAN REMINISCENSES

by

Lyman E. Butler

I have often wondered how many people in town still remember old Steve Drew. We kids called him Stevie, not because we were impolite or fresh, but because he liked it that way. He encouraged us to be friendly and claimed it made him feel young and spry.

He made regular trips to Warrentown from his home which was, I believe, off Sproat street. I can well remember that huge bag of goodies he carried on his arm and the black oilcloth that covered it against sun and storm. We youngsters wondered how such an old man could carry so heavy a load day after day on his different trips all around the town. Stevie's basket was loaded with all the popular crackers of the times such as common crackers, ginger snaps and the varied line sold by Uneeda, not to mention popcorn cakes, cocoanut cakes, licorice sticks, jaw breakers, all-day-suckers, gum drops and all the rest of the belly-ache producing penny candy of those good old days. Steve was just one of those guys a fella never forgets, even when his grandfather days set in and produce absorbing problems.

At one time I remember my two Brothers and I had scarlet fever and were quarantined for six weeks. My Father was caught in, as they say, and could not work, so money was tight. This didn't bother Steve at all; he came every week as usual and left whatever we wanted on the porch. After my Father went back to work again we paid old Steve for all his candy and crackers and his friendly, thoughtful generosity and understanding. I wonder how many men would trust a bunch of kids for candy and "eats" for six weeks or so today?

More Stones

In the last Antiquarian, Vol. V, No. 2, pages six and seven, I pointed out the possibility of the existence of factual testimony proving an 18th century millstone area or quarry on Albert Sears' property, formerly the John Bennett place. (See Vol. V, No. 1 - No. 2 - inventory of Jacob Bennett estate 1769). Through the publication of this discovery (see Weston's History of the Town of Middleborough) already exploited by Edward Rowe Snow in a newspaper article copied in essence from our town history, I heard of another buried stone in the same general location.

My friend Edward Grossman who used to live in the old Brown place on Plymouth street did not remember the one pictured in the last issue, but did know of another some distance south with a round hole cut in it. Albert Sears remembered seeing this stone and thought it might have been used by the Indians for grinding corn by hand.

With directions from both memories I finally found the spot. After considerable excavation this reminder of early industry and hand labor came clearly in sight. The hole is well centered and a perfect circle, nine inches in diameter and about six deep. It is possible, I suppose, that the Indians **could** have started a small hole in this rock, and by daily pounding worn it down six inches, but I doubt it. It seems far more likely that one of the Bennetts, following the example of George Danson (Vol. V, No. 2) looked over his property for millstone material and went to work.

I dug further and found that this stone was not perfectly flat like the other example, but fashioned with a dome-like surface. Although I am not sure, I believe many millstones were made with such a top finish to let the ground grain slide out more easily. As I pointed out before, I still think it possible that this area was once the scene of millstone activity, starting with George Danson about 1675, and perhaps continuing through the 18th century. Good news for the museum — when Mr. Sears sells the property, he will give us the stone! Who will deliver it???

There is an old tale Albert Sears remembers, told to him by his Father, about a handprint on one of the many stone walls running throughout the property. Just what his Satanic Maj[illegible] was doing on the Bennett lands no one seems to know: whethe[illegible] in hot pursuit of a victim, or escaping from the clutches of Major John Bennett is not a part of the story. All we hear is that the Devil vaulted the wall and left his handprint on one of the capstones. In this enlightened age, of course, it is obvious that someone painstakingly carved a handprint on this stone. I often wonder how much of our history has been written the same way. Currently such a deed might well be termed juvenile delinquency. Now that the story has become folklore, who knows— maybe the Old Boy really did vault the wall and thus burn his imprint into the rock to beguile future students of history.

As soon as time permits, I hope to explore the "old city" and the old Sproat cellar holes. I'll report what I am able to discover in a future issue.

(Editor's note: Mr. Sears says he will be glad to give the stone or stones to the museum any time they will dig them out and transport them. We will confer with William L. Byrne before taking any further action. Any man who can pick up the old Sproat Tavern outhouse and drop it on Jackson street ready for a foundation is the guy to solve this problem.)

EXCHANGES

Minnesota History — Vol. 38, No. 5. March 1963.

We note in this issue that the Central Division of the Antique Automobile Club of America, in cooperation with the Minnesota Region, will observe the golden anniversary of the last Glidden Tour at a commemorative meet to be held in the Twin-Cities July 11-14, 1963. The story in this issue, **The Last of the Glidden Tours, Minneapolis to Glacier Park, 1913** by Dr. Waters, is in itself a fascinating pictorial record. We suggest that Austen Beals (Vol. V, No. 2) and Donald Foy get toget[illegible] and represent us.

The Eddy Family Association Bulletin — Vol. XXXXII, No. 1, April 1963, reports progress in the restoration plans for the Zachariah Eddy Homestead in Eddyville at the corner of Plympton and Cedar streets. The old home built in 1803 will be open to the public for the first time under the direction of the Association. Hosts and hostesses have volunteered to be on duty Saturdays and Sundays from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. throughout July and August, and I am sure many of our members and subscribers will be interested not only in seeing this architectural example of American building at the turn of century, but in helping in the Treasure Chest sale and supporting this local contribution to the preservation of factual American history.

History News — American Association for State and Local History — Vol. XVIII, No. 7, May 1963, cites as usual over thirty American historical groups that are holding the fort against too fast progress and trying to retain for the atomic future at least a small and accurate picture of our first two centuries. To me the outstanding story is the proposed restoration of the William Judson house, originally built of stone in 1639 and torn down and rebuilt in 1723, in Stratford, Connecticut. The word that strikes my eye is **volunteers.** We of the Jackson street fraternity know all too well what these Stratfordians are facing, and we wish them all the luck they deserve. We wish our own buildings could boast foundations laid in 1639.

The Call Number — University of Oregon Library — Vol. 24, No. 2, Spring 1963. This issue is devoted entirely to a pictorial record, or portrait, of Portland, Oregon. Although Mi[illegible]dleborough hasn't become a great city, I think we might poi[illegible] with a little pride to the Middleborough Antiquarian for last June—our Fortieth Anniversary number. The pictorial wrapper of the Call Number shows the long outmoded trolley cars, just as John Rockwell (Antiquarian, Vol. 1, No. 3) recorded **The Birth and Burial** of the many lines that served our area many years ago. These records of American development are the background and foundation of the U. S. A., whether New York City, Chicago, Portland or Middleborough.

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Volume V November, 1963 Number 4

ABOUT HISTORICAL MUSEUMS

by

Lyman E. Butler

Although this article does not pertain to Middleborough directly, certain parts bear a similarity which I will point out as I go along.

On a recent trip to Vermont, my family and I went through several small towns and noted that in three different communities they were celebrating their two hundredth anniversaries. Although we know that this part of the Country was settled much later than ours, many towns are becoming conscious of their historical background.

We stayed in the little town of Cabot with former residents of Middleborough, Helen Talbert and Ruth Peck, daughters of Charles Shaw, who ran the milk route and lived in Warrentown many years ago.

This town has a population of only eight or nine hundred. I was very pleased to learn that this Spring they had started a Historical Society and museum. Cabot was settled in 1783, and like Middleborough, had other settlements before the present center was planned.

In Middleborough we know that at one time Muttock was a thriving community, also the Green, and of course the Town House was at South Main and West Grove streets. Likewise in Cabot the first settlement was on a plain at the highest point for miles around. This site was chosen because it was directly on the Hazen-Bailey Military road, built by the Army for the movement of troops from Newbury, Vermont, to Canada during the Revolutionary War. Slaves were smuggled over this same road prior to the Civil War. A few years later the so-called center was settled with a church, school, store and pound, etc.

Several years afterwards, as mills were built in the valley on the Winooski River, the present village was organized. The church was taken apart and moved down to the new location. The other buildings were left on the plain to deteriorate.

Some of these settlements still remain, and like Middleborough, there are North, South and East Cabot, each at one time having had their own industry. As many of you can recall there was a sizeable shoe shop in North Middleborough, Keith & Pratt I believe it was called. South Middleborough had its saw mills, woodworking shops and blacksmith shops, while East Middleborough boasted saw mills, box shops, etc. Our towns are very much alike looking back through the years.

The historical group were sponsoring a trip to old sites and ruins, and we were invited to go along. It was a very interesting experience, and the thing that took my eye was the fact that locations where history had been obliterated were carefully preserved with granite markers. We could do that with a lot of historical locations right here in Middleborough at not too great expense. (Editor's note: AND we most certainly should. We have had inquiries from several New England historical organizations recently asking if our Association could guide their members on a tour of Middleborough's historical landmarks and sites.)

The Cabot museum is just getting started, and they have rooms in the basement of their town hall. Several hundred dollars have already been spent in preparing the rooms for exhibits. They do not have too much to offer at present, but they have a live wire group behind this project and are moving fast. I told them about our buildings and learned that they are hoping to acquire and preserve an old house for their collections eventually.

Although most people think of this section of Vermont as farm country, it was surprising to find that in this town alone there were two tanneries, a woolen mill, a carding factory, copper shop, tin shop, starch and lye works, butter firkin and sugar bucket shops, carriage, wagon and sleigh manufactories as well as several of the old chair makers' shops. If they can find and preserve some of the memorabilia from these industries they should have quite a museum in years to come.

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During our stay we had the opportunity of visiting several museums. The Maple Sugar Museum at St. Johnsbury, Vt., shows in interesting detail the old methods of making sugar. We visited the Barre Historical exhibits, the Barre Granite Museum, and last but not least our friends took us to the Kent Museum at Calais, Vt., just a few miles from Montpelier. This museum was originally the A. Kent Hotel, started by two brothers, Abdiel and Ira Kent in 1837. This family must have held the same position in the town as Judge Oliver's in Middleborough. The materials to build the hotel came from their own saw mill, brick yard, blacksmith and nail works. About the only things that came from away were the wall paper from Boston and the rum, which sold for six cents a pint!

In 1930 this building was presented to the Vermont Historical Museum by Atwater Kent of radio fame who was a grandson of Abdiel. If any of our members are ever in the vicinity it would be well worth their while to visit this museum. The wonderful furnishings and exhibits are different from ours; where we have Sandwich glass of which they have hardly heard, they have Bennington ware produced by the Nortons and other well known American potters of the same period. Their general store, however, is not as good as our own Peter H. Peirce store on Jackson street. I could go on for pages about the celebrated Harold Goddard Rugg collection and the personal collection of Atwater Kent himself. (Editor's note: I wish you could, but we have to leave space for our advertisers, God Bless 'em.)

In closing I will add that we took in three auctions on the trip, and let me tell you there are still plenty of good American antiques in Vermont!

HELP WANTED

Where are the hundred questions that have popped up since the last issue? Down in the museum office in one of the file cabinets, of course. Why didn't we have a list ready for this issue? Because, dod-blast it all, we're human, too.

However, we do have several answers to this column's questions and puzzles for June. Thanks to Mertie Witbeck we have a definite answer to date the marble stone step from Drake's Drug Store, now sitting beside the entrance to our Peirce Store at the museum. In the Gazette for September 28, 1906, a short notice tells us that Charles W. Drake took over John Shaw's drug business about 1892, and it seems probable that our stone was cut and placed during that first year. Rose Pratt adds that she remembers it near or next to Shurtleff Hardware on South Main street. She also remembers Samuel and William Keyes — (question No. 7) — Keyes Brothers, Florists, Centre street. Their green houses were in the back yard, and active up to about 1905 or maybe a little later.

Two "IDEAL" olive spoon and pickle fork combination eating tools have turned up. M. E. W. to the rescue again, with the help of our Gazette files. (N.B. One of the crimes of progress and growth of humanity is the fact that although American newspaper files of years ago will be consulted for years to come, the newspaper files of our 20th century—printed as they must be on a flimsy imitation called newsprint—will brown and crumble long before we enter the 21st century.) In the Gazette for September 13, 1907, we find the following:

A new enterprise has recently been set on foot in Middleboro. We refer to the establishment of the Middleboro Silver Co. — Henry D. Smith (former manager of the Drake Drug Store, and later of Smith & Hathaway of Middleboro, Druggists) is at present manager, but the work will be in charge of skilled workmen of long experience. Mr. Smith is the owner of the patented "IDEAL" olive spoon and pickle fork which is now being made on a royalty basis by a number of leading silver manufacturers. A part of the work heretofore done by these concerns will be done in Middleboro. The plant is located on Lane street at present but the firm plans in the future to occupy larger quarters." (M. E. W. adds — "I still think the cases for these silver gadgets were made by the Schleuter Jewelry Case Co. in their plant located on Jackson street where the Dean Shoe Co. now stands.")

THE MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
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Lawrence B. Romaine
Richard S. Tripp } Editors

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N. B.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury:

I address you our members, our advertisers, our subscribers and our many other institutional and individual readers who have not as yet indicated your interest in wampum of the realm by subscribing — or better, joining our ranks. I address you not as the district attorney or the judge, but as defence council. To err is human, to eliminate all criticism and prejudice and declare for the defendant would be delightful.

I alone am responsible for the birth of the Middleborough Antiquarian, be it good, bad or indifferent in your opinion. It has survived four years as a quarterly organ of the Association — it has lived through letterpress with good illustrations, as well as mimeo, it has survived financial straits as you all well know. Without the loyal support of a small group it would have strangled and passed away after the first issue — my sincere thanks to you — I hope you still feel as I do that it has been a credit to the Town and that its distribution throughout the Country has helped to put us on the map, as that dear old trite saying goes.

Starting our fifth year, in the hole as usual, I decided that advertising was the only answer to survival. It was suggested that we ought to give the advertisers at least 5 issues for their money, and the subscribers at least one extra issue for their morale. We went ahead, as you know, and now as we approach No. 4, we are busted again! "When in the course of human events . . ." (Thank you, Mr. Jefferson) it becomes a question whether to sacrifice quality for quantity, I think most of you will agree with me. I have therefore decided, with the approval of the Board, to close 1963 in letter-press with illustrations, four issues as during our first four years, and hope that all concerned will understand and continue their interest and support in the future of The Middleborough Antiquarian.

Lawrence B. Romaine, Editor

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OLD SAWMILLS OF MIDDLEBORO AS I REMEMBER THEM

by

Ernest S. Pratt

One of my earliest recollections, is of riding with my father, on a load of logs, from Mathew H. Cushing's wood-lot on Plympton Street, to Bryant's Sawmill, on the corner of Plympton and Raven Streets. As we were nearing the mill, our old white horse, with a cantankerous nature, decided to leave this world and enter the next. With the help of another teamster, father rolled him into the bushes side of the road. The next day, he gave the horse a proper burial.

Bryant's mill was one where box boards were sawed, and boxes were made. Power was furnished by a water wheel. This area around the mill was later converted into a cranberry bog, and the mill itself, was used for a screen house by William A. Andrews. Walter and Horace Bryant owned the mill. Their descendants are Mrs. Fred Benson and H. E. "Hank" Bryant.

On the same stream, between Plympton and Fuller Streets, were two more mills, operated by water power, sawing out logs for box lumber. The first one was operated by "Bennie Frank" Thompson. An unusual experience happened to my father, in his later years, when he had more leisure time to ride around the country. He was driving across from Fuller Street, over the sluiceway of this mill, when suddenly his horse "Charlie" disappeared into the depths below, and he found himself in a very precarious situation. He was in the wagon, and the horse more or less upside down, in the sluiceway. "Charlie" was very understanding, and listening to Father's assuring words, he refrained from thrashing around. Father sought help, from the Bryant Homestead, a quarter of a mile away, and finally extricated the horse, and led him to the mill, on the opposite side of the stream. The wagon was transported across the rickety sluiceway, minor repairs made to the harness, and the horse, not seriously injured, was again hitched to the vehicle. Father proceeded home, to tell the family his exciting story.

Down stream was another mill, for many years operated by water power. It was an "up and down mill," the first one I ever knew about, in this area. The saw was in the center of a great frame, and was operated up and down, by a lever, similar to a grind stone. This is the reason for the very wide boards used in the old houses about here. This type of mill worked very slowly, and boards of great width could be produced.

Later the circular saw was introduced, which was faster, but did not saw such wide boards. Later on this same site, a steam mill was erected, where box boards and cedar shingles were sawed out. Many of the shingles used on the buildings on the Pratt Farm, came from the Great Cedar Swamp, and were processed through this mill. The mill was owned and operated by George Alton Cox, and afterward by Robert Fickert. This entire area was later converted into cranberry property by Mr. Urann.

Another mill I recollect, was on the Mill Site on Wareham Street, adjacent to the present Light Station. Here, George Clark, from Fall Brook, was operating a sawmill. This business was developed into the large steam mill factory on Cambridge Street, known as the Clark and Cole Box Factory. It was located where is at present, the E. W. Goodhue Lumber Co., Inc. In the Nineties, when the Plymouth Railroad was built, the company bought large wood lots in Carver and Darby. Sometimes the mill was closed for a day, so all the employees could go and load logs onto the freight cars. The company grew to the capacity of sawing a million feet of lumber a year. Three car loads of boxes were sent daily to Boston for shipping purposes. The company owned twenty horses and employed more than one hundred men, in the factory, beside wood choppers, and teamsters, working under contract, hauling logs from the woodlots. Among the employees were Grover Bennett, in the "nailing-room," Al Sparrow, millwright, "Curt" Dunham, Mr. Auger, Freeman Crosby, Lem Waters, and you may remember many others.

Mr. Elmer Cole superintended the factory. Mr. George Clark supervised the cutting and hauling logs, and work outside the mill. During these years a daily trip by team to Bridgewater, carried boxes for the McElwain Shoe Co. for shipping.

After the passing of Mr. Clark, Mr. Cole continued the business. Mr. Richard Clark of Rochester was the last owner of the factory. As paper cartons took the place of wooden boxes, this business declined. All the machinery and property were sold at auction in 1914. Lawyer D. D. Sullivan was the highest bidder for the factory and mill yard. He was instrumental in interesting Mr. Frederick Lobl, who purchased the property, which was destroyed by fire in 1919.

There was another large wooden box factory at Rock, owned by C. N. Atwood, and afterward by his son, Levi Atwood. When I was a boy, I saw many teams, waiting in a long line, for their turn to have logs measured. This mill was later operated by Rock Mfg. Co. This, too, was destroyed by fire.

Seneca Thomas and Dura Weston owned the first steam mill in the Rocky Meadow section of town. It was on Purchase Street. They sawed long lumber and barrel staves. Seneca Thomas also had a mill on a lane off Purchase Street. This was an "up and down mill," run by water wheel, and produced long lumber. It had an upright wheel, with paddles at the bottom. When Mr. Thomas and Mr. Weston dissolved partnership, part of the mill was moved to a location near the present Rocky Meadow Cranberry Bog. Dura Weston and his son worked this mill. Seneca Thomas and his son Russell worked the mill off Purchase Street. This business was later continued under the ownership of Lothrop Thomas, still later by his son Ichabod B. Thomas.

Later there was a modern steam mill, on Rocky Meadow Street, owned and operated by Ebenezer Shaw, who lost his life by being wound up in the shafting. His son, Benjamin C. Shaw, operated the mill many years afterward. When I started in the ice business in 1908, I hauled sawdust from this mill, to insulate all my ice houses. At that time sawdust was given away, and now it is $6.00 per cord at the mill.

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Other mills operated by water-wheel, or steam, were owned and operated by Harrison Atwood, on Thompson Street; by Albert T. Savery, in East Middleboro, on Waterville Pond; by Lyman Osborne, near the Lakeville town line, by Mr. Marshall, on the Fall Brook Stream. James Thomas sawed lumber and made hornbeam rolls in Fall Brook. John L. Benson, Ed Witham and Charles Hunt, were owners and operators in South Middleboro. The Shurtleffs had mills in the France neighborhood.

During this period of years, millions of feet of lumber, in the form of box boards, shooks, and finished boxes, were shipped from Plymouth and Bristol Counties, where grew the best white pine in the State.

◆

A TRIP DOWN MAIN STREET

Some time ago

by

James A. Burgess

From the Middleboro Gazette of January 22, 1909

(Contributed and Edited by Mertie E. Witbeck)

In the early 1900's, James A. Burgess was a well-known town character. He was born at Muttock in 1836 on a tract of land formerly owned by Judge Oliver. During his lifetime he held almost all of the appointive offices in the town, being particularly active in enforcing Board of Health rules and in suppressing the illegal sale of liquor. In the following article, it must be remembered when Mr. Burgess speaks of a house being occupied by a certain family, he is speaking as of 1909.

Let us get into the electric car and ride to the Lakeville line. We will alight and take a walk back. On the right hand side of the street and within a few rods of the stone post, the dividing line, stood the shoe shop of Hannah Reed. In those days we had two custom shoemakers, Hannah Reed and John Hersey. We hadn't then heard of Wurtemburg. I well remember going with my father to Hannah Reed's to have my shoes made. She was a woman who had heavy, coal black hair and skin about the color of oak tan leather.

We will come down this way and on the right the first house was the home of the Crossmans. (Ed. note: Stood high on a bank just before coming to the railroad bridge, destroyed by fire) They came here from Easton. It was a peculiar family, well educated. Hannah, familiarly called, was a prominent school teacher, and noted as a first class fighter in a church row. We had an old doctor around here known as Dr. Emery. When he died Cordelia Crossman sought his mantle and she started out as a cancer doctor. There was one son, Alpha, who in his early days was a clerk in the stores of Ebenezer Soule and Colonel Thomas Weston at Muttock.

The next house which was standing when I was a boy was the Madam Morton house, so called. (Ed. note: Stood on the south corner of what is now Prospect Street) It was occupied by Albert Pickens and his mother. Albert was an old-time music teacher, and when music was taught in its original package. He was a teacher of music at Peirce Academy and I am told that he had a pianoforte with the insides taken out so that whoever he taught to play had to handle the keys without the insides working. This house itself was sold to Cordelia Crossman and is now—let's have it right, as the history of Middleboro or no other document I have seen tells where the house really stands—in the rear of the two story house next to Elisha Thomas' on School Street.

The next house stood up a lane near Grove Street and in my earliest recollections was occupied by Granville Sproat, who came home from California and brought a man with him who had some ponies and all the paraphernalia which went with an "Injun" family of the west. He and his man were dressed in "Injun" costume with painted faces and feathers over their heads and backs. They would mount their ponies and go through the village yelling, with tomahawks, bows and arrows, and would give entertainments in the old town house. That house is now the home of Mrs. Col. Turner on Rock Street.

Very near where Hon. M. H. Cushing's house now stands was the next one. (Ed. note: Cushing house now owned by Mrs. L. A. Baker) It was known as the Miller house. Mrs. Miller seemed to be the oracle in those days. She was noted for her strange stories. Also the place was headquarters for the remnant of the Betty Neck tribe of Indians. The last one that I remember was Phoebe Squinn, who was a frequent visitor and she worked at my mother's home. That house was recently burned at the foot of Rock Street.

On that side of the street the next house was the home of Philander Washburn, now occupied by the family of the late Levi P. Thatcher. But one surviving member of the Washburn family lives. He is the Rev. George Washburn of Robert College, Constantinople.

The next house was what is known as the Drake house, which was owned by the heirs of Thomas Leonard. (Ed. note: Stood about where Hodder's and Anderson's Barber Shop now stands) Afterwards it was occupied by his son James for a little while. But when the members of the family dispersed, with the exception of James, they went to New Bedford to live. They regretted they were obliged to leave Middleboro. One sister, Sally, who was an old maid, too regretted that she must go, but insisted the snuff which she was to use must come from Col. Peirce's store.

A store was the next building. It stood on the corner (of Main and Water, now Wareham, Streets) and was afterwards made into the American Building.

On Cushing's corner was a building built by Gen. Abiel Washburn for his son Philander who did there what he did everywhere else, made a failure. He afterwards went to Muttock. The store was afterwards occupied by George Waterman as a grocery.

We will now drop down to Peckham's Market. (Ed. note: In rear of above building) There lived George Soule and his wife Mary. The room now occupied by the market was his wife's millinery room. She seemed to be a born milliner. Upstairs they lived, and in the rear was Mr. Soule's cabinet room, undertaking shop and his political headquarters. They were two of the most industrious people in that day. Always at business, Mr. Soule was a very strong temperance man, very strong anti-slavery man and a man who was so broad-minded in all his views that his name never graced the pages of a Christian church. And yet he was a man so liberal minded and so kind that as a boy, when around there, I often heard him say that the Sermon on the Mount was good enough for him to live by and die by. In politics he was a war horse. He was one of the few men that voted for Hon. John P. Hale in 1848, then a free soil candidate. He was a maker of town officers and of legislators. Some of my very first lessons in politics I learned from George Soule. He never was known to give in on anything he started. He left a nice business and two children. One, Charles, an invalid at home, and the other, George L. Soule, who today is known as the greatest mathematician of the present century.

We will go on to "Mike's Corner" (Michael O'Toole) and there picture in your mind's eye a busy industry run by Ebenezer Briggs, his straw factory. And let's recall how our bonnets and hats were made then. In every neighborhood there was a rye field, and from that field was cut the straw which was bleached and split and braided. Some of our women were so particular as to select the straw they wanted cut, and with brimstone in a barrel would bleach and steam their own straw and get it ready to work into hats. The strands of the braids were braided 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 strands, and it was then trimmed and carted to Mr. Briggs and put out to be made into bonnets and hats and then returned to his shop to be finished. In after years the sewing of the hats was done at the factory. It was afterwards run by William King. Then the Pickens brothers took it up.

Next is the vacant lot. There stood the home of "Uncle Amos" as he was called. He really ran the first store of the kind in our town. In his window were wooden toys made with a jackknife and a file, stained by berries to color them, and there they were sold. He had peanuts and all kinds of nuts, pipes, tobacco,

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candy of all kinds, gooseberries and pickles, and a boy could get a big one for a cent. Later on he had oysters and sold them by the plate or by the stew, and this made our first restaurant in Middleboro.

The Robinson family now occupies what was the next house. Maj. Ethan Earle occupied it then. He married a daughter of Levi Peirce. The brick building then as it is now, was occupied by almost everyone. It was a jewelry store as long ago as I can remember.

Next came Louis Ritter's cobbler shop which was used by Maj. Earle as millinery rooms. From these rooms went forth four plum silk bonnets for families at the Green. There seemed to be rivals on styles at the old church at the Green. In those days we did not have department stores. Fred Whitman hadn't arrived. And what you couldn't buy at Col. Peirce's or General Washburn's you had to send to Boston for. This happened to be a time when they got what they wanted at home, and more, too, before they were done. It was the understanding that the same style bonnets should be made for two women only, but when there came to be made four, and all the same style, the contest was so warm at the church at the Green that the pastor had to turn on the balm of Gilead and smooth the troubled waters.

The next store was Col. Peter Peirce's. As I remember it then and the character of the man and his family of children and their peculiarities, we must recall the fact that behind the counter stood the man who laid the foundation of the great wealth which when the last son passed away was left, the income to be used for the town. In order to reap the full benefit of that money one now has to own an automobile.

In the house now occupied by the Drews, (Ed. note: Where the Fire Station now stands) Allan Shaw, his wife Almira and his three children, Elvira, Allen and James lived. He was our druggist on the corner, he was our postmaster and our town clerk. His oldest and only daughter married Joseph Sampson. She afterwards went to Chicago and the widow went too. The widow was a very bright woman and belonged to a party of elderly women who were noted for the eccentricities of their lives. My mother chanced to be one of them, and in the last letter my mother received from Mrs. Shaw she said that she would give more to see one of the old faces of Middleboro than all the brownstone fronts of Chicago.

The next house, now owned by Mrs. Ryder, was owned by the widow Shaw who lived there with her son Henry and two daughters.

The next house, now occupied by Charles F. Cornish (Ed. note: Removed to make way for addition to High School) was the home of Richard Holmes. He was a born mechanic and to all boyish minds he was a wonder because if the blade of a jackknife broke he made a new one, and if you wanted any repairing done he was the fellow to turn his hand to fixing anything.

The next building was the school house which when the two districts were consolidated, was moved and is the school house now at Muttock. The other schoolhouse, near Rock Street, is now Tripp's Waiting Room.

Across the head of Barrows Street, down to where the C. P. Washburn house is, was the home of Cornelius Burgess and his wife Melissa, who took boarders, scholars from Peirce Academy.

The next house was the Amasa Lamb property, now owned by Mrs. McNally and occupied by Chester Porter. He was one of the old workmen at the "lower factory" so called.

And now our quick trip is done. In the near future we will take a walk back on the other side of the road to where we started out in the beginning.

GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST

by

Henry W. Mouse, Jr.

Back along several years ago a dozen or so of my family of various and sundry generations lived happily on Jackson street in four little houses that had been built by the Peirces for mill and store employees about 1810 or so — at least to the best of my recollection, that's what Col. Henry Mouse my great, great, great grandfather used to say. Colonel Henry, by the way, was a resident in Judge Oliver's famous hall years before that, but moved hastily to the old Sproat house (see **Ward House Nee Sproat** this issue) at the time of the fire. He SAYS he slipped his family into the wagon with the doors and panelling when Sproat stole it, but to be honest with you, he was a durned liar, especially when in his cups, and I've never felt quite sure of this particular tale). He SAYS that when General Ward bought the place, he sneaked the family out and took up lodgings on Jackson street. These four buildings were new then, of course, and I gather that the folks living in them were more generous (or, sloppy, take your pick) than the General's. At any rate, like the famous rifle always known in a certain family as one that lay beside an American soldier who froze to death in his sleep at Valley Forge — and later turned out to have been manufactured at Harper's Ferry in 1861 — that's the story. History is not an exact science and can't be until historians start writing down facts as they happen.

Well, as we came along in the course of time as mice will — much the same as humans and rabbits — life was peaceful and plentiful. We romped along with the kids on their way to ball games at Battis Field (even though they didn't see us), and life was just one goll durned thing after another, all of 'em fun.

Then all of a sudden along comes an ugly rumor from the town hall — "Bulldoze those durned buildings into their cellar holes (where we were living of course) and let's clean the place up and make it a respectable street, with the Girl Scouts on one side and a park and parking lot on the other. Well, Sir, you could'a twisted my tail into forty knots and I wouldn't 'a felt it at all. Progress! Worse than the State and all its thruways and highways so a lotta travelling "nothingelsetodoers" can gadabout all over the country sightseeing. (Well, gee now, mebbe I shouldn'a said that. They are our paying cash customers — sorry folks — skip it).

Well, anyway, this is supposed to be a sort of a short-short story, and after all any story ought'a have a point. Any of you humans might well wonder why in tunket a mere mouse should care a tinker's durn whether history is preserved or not. Well, I'm not sure I do. However, the fact remains that this local historical association goes to bat, see, — and the result is that the Mouse family not only stays on but has two houses redecorated and fixed up scrumptious. Now b'gosh we're livin' with Strand wallpapers, Lavinia Warren's (Mrs. Tom Thumb to you) memorabilia and personal effects (as you folks like to put it), records of the G.A.R., and many other rooms oozing with tons of stuff reminiscent of dear old Henry's recollections.

GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST, what more could a mouse ask — I ask you — even if I can't speak the King's English — and after King George III got smothered under a lotta paint and a coupla vases of flowers, who wants to anyway? When you read the rest of it and this editor, so-called, asks if you've ever heard of the museum mouse of Middleborough, ignore it. I decided to put my tail into this issue anyway, even if I had to sneak in Thatcher's back door. So there you have it all. As long as the Middleborough Historical Association, Inc. wants to support us mice, we'll support you. It's as simple as that. You scratch my back, Folks, and believe you me, I'll scratch yours. OK?

THE WARD HOUSE, NEE SPROAT
LAKEVILLE, MASS.
1711 - 1963

or

Who Buried George III in a Vase of Flowers?

by

Lawrence B. Romaine

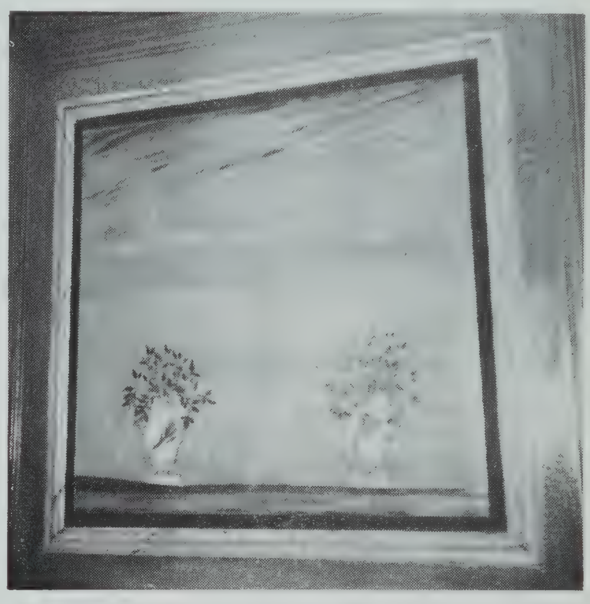
Each year in the hectic course of human events the tide of changing tastes carries out with it thousands of once cherished homes and buildings with their entire contents. When it comes roaring in again during the next twelve months, like the great tides of the oceans, it brings with it thousands of new, garish, ultra-gilded substitutes. The world stands still for a minute or two and glories in its progress, and then people seem to say — "NOW, let's get rid of all this junk and invent something really worthwhile."

Fortunately there is a small segment of the human race known as antiquarians, historians or scholars (crackpots, of course, to the great majority) who believe that the future is dependent on the past, and that records of the present must be kept and preserved as a background and foundation for tomorrow's changes. What is man without his history? What is the meaning of the greatest and largest and most modern building of 1963 without the story of the cave man, the work of Vitruvius (1483) or Asher Benjamin's **Country Builder's Assistant** (1797)? What is the meaning of the finest mural in this greatest, largest and most modern building of 1963 (if it has one) without the drawings of the Stone Age and the decorative wall painting of the 18th century? Don't you sometimes refer to your grandfather and your family with pride?

Middleborough is fortunate. During the W.P.A. era the Historic American Building Survey of our Department of the Interior made detailed drawings with accurate specifications, as well as fine photographs, of many of our architectural heirlooms. You may see them and study them in the Museum Library on Jackson street. Many of them are still standing to remind future generations that graceful living was not always a struggle in atomic bomb shelters surrounded by super highways. Others of which we have no such complete records are patiently waiting to be tumbled into their cellars to make way for progress or a "fast buck" in some housing development.

It is my purpose in these scanty notes to clarify and complete another record rather than belittle the accounts in our two histories: Weston's **History of the Town of Middleborough** and Viger's **History of the Town of Lakeville.** I note here that before 1853 Lakeville was a part of Middleborough, so that in the days of which I write these homes were Middleborough architecture; why we ever let them get away from us over such a miserably human squabble over schools I shall never understand! According to these two historians the exact date of the building of the James Sproat home is not known. Records show that Robert Sproat of Scituate conveyed the property to his son James in 1711, and that James moved here in 1712. The house remained in the Sproat family until 1806 when it was sold to General Ward. From that time to the present it has gracefully accepted many additions, embellishments and changes. If you will read the accounts of the Ward house in these two histories you will be ready to understand these comments and perhaps help with the puzzle involved. It is not the purpose of the Antiquarian to reprint printed history; the Lord helps those who help themselves.

It would be a bit trite and Grimm's fairytalish to say that if only old houses could talk they might change volumes of history. Accepting the various dates of many changes, the acquisition and use of paneled doors rescued or stolen from Judge Oliver's famous Hall, and the 19th century additions to the original structure, the most lasting and outstanding features seem to me to be the hand painted decorations on the walls and floors in the upstairs bedroom. Who contributed these examples of early American art to our local heritage? Who added these colorful designs to an already colorful record? Was there a Middleborough artist? Did Zebidee Sproat in his revolutionary wrath cover King George III with vases of flowers? Or were they done by one of the many itinerant artists of the period?



Local legend, supported by several Lakeville residents with good memories, and collected enthusiastically for me by Lakeville's Town Clerk Evelyn D. Norris, has it that Angelina Sampson decorated the front hall walls in the Colonel John Nelson house (generally known as the Jennie Sampson house that used to stand opposite the Assawampsett School). John Nelson's Daughter Bathsheba Nelson married Abiel Sampson (if you hanker for genealogy), whose Son James was born in Providence, R.I. Aunt Angelina and Jennie Sampson returned to live in the old Nelson home about 1880. Angelina had meantime graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design, founded in 1877.

The story stems from the pleasant memories of little girls in pig-tails who were entertained with tea and cookies by Jennie who told them that Aunt Angelina was the artist. Wide eyes and clear impressions of the wonderful work of the Rhode Island School of Design! Naturally the story continues. The Sampsons and the Wards were close friends and neighbors, and **wouldn't** Aunt Angelina have been only too glad to decorate their floors and walls with her newly found talent? Of course she would. And wouldn't the Wards have been tickled pink? On the other hand, **what** in the whole wide, wide world would Aunt Angelina have had against poor old King George in 1880? Undoubtedly her training at the School of Design would have taught her appreciation of this fine old portrait, and she never would have plastered it over with fancy vases of flowers in the late 18th century manner of which she knew nothing at all.

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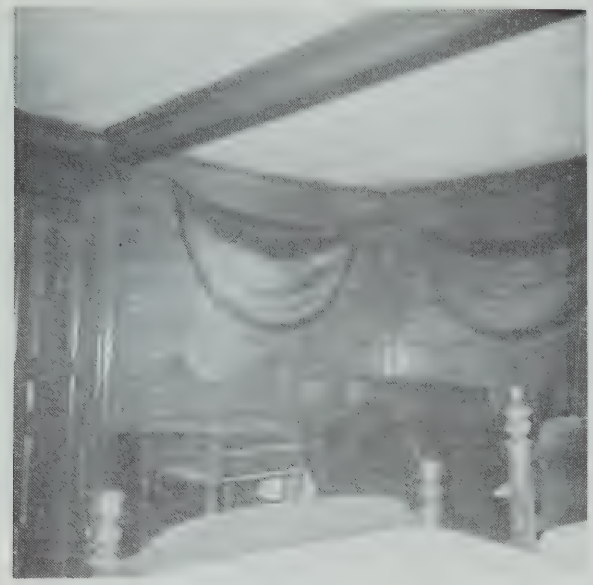

To the best of my knowledge there are only three authoritative works in this field. Nina Fletcher Little's **American Decorative Wall Painting 1700 - 1850** is to my mind the last word. In her preface, however, Mrs. Little names two pioneer works for constant reference: Edward B. Allen's **Early American Wall Painting**, and Janet Waring's **Early American Stencils on Walls and Furniture.** Even the hastiest perusal of Mrs. Little's research and a quick glance at her illustrations will prove without a doubt that the wall decorations in both the Jennie Sampson house and the old Ward, nee Sproat home, must have been done about 1800. No stretch of the imagination could believe that the Rhode Island School of Design would have recognised such art, let alone teach it, when it opened its doors in 1877.

As Mrs. Little points out, — "old accounts do not record names of wandering artists who seemed to come from nowhere, and to depart for an equally mysterious destination." Her examination of the hall in the old Jennie Sampson house would suggest that these decorations were by the same hand that painted American rooms in Shaftsbury, Vermont, and in Easton and Northfield Farms, Massachusetts. There is no proof that this same wandering artist decorated the Ward house, but the drapes and festoons are typical of the work of this same period. After a sojourn in Easton perhaps this footloose and fancy free Rembrandt set out for New Bedford looking for work. Perhaps he dropped in at Sampson's Tavern and spent a "groggy" evening with Zebidee Sproat and Colonel John Nelson. Perhaps this might have been in 1794 when the Colonel had just finished building his new home — and — why not? Zebidee, after a dozen hot toddies might well have said, "If you'll come over and exterminate that damned King over my mantel I'll buy you a barrel of rum." Perhaps with a barrel to work with the artist really went to work on all four walls and the floor to boot — a delightful imitation of a decorative rug, incidentally, and with no vacuum cleaners, far easier to keep neat. Maybe he did the Colonel's hall first but completed the job as agreed in a business-like manner, and with a promised barrel of grog just down the road, hurried on. Or perhaps he was a teetotaler, though I have my doubts, for in this period rum flowed throughout New England like wine in Paris. Dreaming is pleasant but it seldom solves problems.

I give you Mrs. Little's exhaustive study, Mrs. Viger's history and Mr. Weston's history, and I ask you to read. We offer, thanks to Hollis Blackburn, the picture of the old (Sproat) Ward house from Mrs. Viger's history. Thanks to Mrs. Little we have supplied illustrations showing the vases of flowers hiding King George's portrait (IF, of course, this tale is true!) over the mantel, and two walls showing the drapes and festoons or tassels. The vases are white with red and green flowers on a field of light green in a marbled frame. The drapes are a brown with red flecked tassels. The painting of the simulated rug on the floor is pretty well worn and the snapshot wouldn't make a decent cut. For an illustration of the hallway in the (Nelson) Jennie Sampson house you will have to study page 96 in Mrs. Little's book at the library. The house was flaked and moved to North Chatham on Cape Cod years ago.

I do not mean to look down my nose at these tales of long ago, but I do feel we should correct this historical fracture. Students and scholars such as Nina Fletcher Little, Janet Waring and Edward B. Allen have pretty well proven that American walls were hand decorated and painted and stenciled in this manner before the end of the first quarter of the 19th century. Further, I am convinced—and Mrs. Little agrees (or perhaps she suggested it?) that there is only one reasonable answer to this bit of folklore—i.e.—when the Sampsons came back to the old Nelson home they naturally wanted to change the old paper and paint and freshen things up a bit. When they found the old decorations under the wall paper in the front hall, Aunt Angelina was fascinated and of course touched them up a bit, carefully following the old designs and matching the colors as best she could. Paper? Yes, that is conjecture — but if not papered over, then very likely faded. When the Wards dropped in for tea they were amazed and delighted at the fresh bright hallway, and remembered how dull the old George III room floors and walls really looked. Do I have to write anything more? Unfortunately, that is the way a great deal of history is written. When you consider that many of us can't even remember many things that happened **last** year, let alone a hundred years, the only thing to do is correct and prove.

All this and Heaven too! What more can I do? Hasn't someone an attic with a mass of old letters, one of which **might** tell of Colonel Nelson or Zebidee Sproat meeting George Chandler at the Sampson Tavern? Isn't it possible that somewhere someone might have an account of the cost of building the Nelson house with perhaps a note about painting the front hallway? Are all the day books of the Sampson Tavern buried in the dust of unknown history? Can't someone find a tavern ledger that might read: "October 13- ye 1795. J. Nelson and G. Chandler 4 pts. of rum?" Isn't it time Lakeville organized its own historical association with a properly catalogued repository and museum? Or should we reorganize and become the Lakeville-Middleborough Historical Association Inc., and move the Ward house to Jackson street? Do I strike a spark of interest? WHO was the artist? He left us a heritage we have neglected. Middleborough **and** Lakeville, all hands on deck — let's produce.

◆

MUSEUM NEWS AND ACQUISITIONS

The innumerability of contributions and gifts that have flowed into our Jackson street archives and museum collections floors us. Lack of coordination and organization (those two delightfully descriptive words that so clearly light the way to bigger and better things) leave us with the problem "who gave what and when?" Why didn't we keep records? **But we did.** The only trouble is cataloguing and filing them! As Dad used to say, if you don't put it where you got it, how are you going to find it when you want to use it again?

One of the most interesting and still frustrating things about history is that in spite of thousands of historical institutions with billions of accumulations of records in both manuscript and print, STILL the greatest newspapers of the universe reprint both daily and weekly the drollest facets and tiny bits AS NEWS. To the historian, scholar and student, these are old hat, but perhaps to the neophyte and the student of tomorrow they are educational records on the calendar of changing times and newly born generations.

Few people who haven't worked on or in a museum or reference library have the slightest comprehension of the size of that word acquisitions. To the casual observer it merely indicates that a museum has acquired a few antiquarian odds and ends. Actually, it also means a close study of provenience, dating, proper care, cataloguing, and finally classification for exhibition.

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For example I take one of the first cigarette or cigar lighters invented, given to us by one of our junior members, Bud Martinson. To exhibit this properly we ought to find a catalogue of novelties for ca. 1890 to 1900, preferably the manufacturer's. Bud says a friend of his gave it to him but didn't know where it came from or who used it. It is made of tinned iron in the shape of a cylinder. On the sides through the rust one can just make out a shield with a sort of flame finial — the shield is divided in half with the word "BOWERS," a star in the upper left, bars in the lower right. Has anyone any ideas? If so, send them in. Incidentally, Bud has been bringing in grain measures, early razor straps, early flat irons and many curiosities from the old Bryant home.

We are indebted to Mrs. Spataro of Reland street for the original manuscript accounts of the old Cosseboom blacksmith shop of Pearl street, now carried on under the same name by Foster and Stephen Jackson. (The forge in our museum blacksmith shop was given to us by the Jacksons) These records go back to 1887 and will quickly correct any illusions some moderns may have about the blacksmith **ONLY** shoeing horses. A. C. Cosseboom shoed horses to be sure, but he also built wagons, lengthened buggies, ironed wheels and whiffletrees and helped to keep the entire community mobile. (One of these entries for Mr. W. Pratt might have been for "Charlie": see "Old Sawmills of Middleborough," this issue, by Ernest S. Pratt). The names in these two ledgers could in themselves provide a basis for a biographical history of the town from about 1887 to 1901.

Although the blacksmith's shop in the museum has been improving all Summer under the guiding hand of Everett Buckman, there was still one important piece missing until Alton Pratt produced a fine old wrought iron vise which is now clamped to the bench firmly gripping one of Bert Thomas' ox shoes of the same period — ca. 1840.

An anonymous gift of 17 large cartons arrived from Virginia during August and quickly filled the old cupboard and one wall of the old Peirce Store. This collection came from an old store "down in the hills" that after 90 years of serving the public had about decided it was time to quit. For our museum's benefit it was exactly the time to quit. Although I know this unknown gentleman and scholar well, I can only thank him — again — for he refuses to come on stage and take a well deserved bow.

Thanks to Samuel Murray of Wilbraham, Mass., we have acquired another puzzle, both for the museum as well as for the town historian. Although we have a dozen or more Peirce Academy circulars on Jackson street, this is the only one that mentions **Middleboro Commercial College.** There is no mention of this college in Weston's History, and to the best of my knowledge, no other record. The eight page pamphlet or circular was printed in Taunton by C. A. Hack & Son, and announces the opening of Middleboro Commercial College September 14, 1868. When I read of the apparatus and cabinets that served instructor John W. P. Jenks and his students at Peirce Academy in 1868, I wince to think of what an exhibit they might have made in the museum on Jackson street. Can anyone throw any light on this college? How long did it last? Are there any relatives of J. Borden Hambly, Principal? "Life Scholarship for the full Commercial Course — $30.00. Diploma — $1.00."

From Henry Vickey of Stoughton we have received an a.l.s. from our once well known Judge Wilkes Wood to Colonel Benjamin P. Wood, Representative "now at Boston." Many of you are familiar with Judge Wood's old home and law office on South Main street where the Vincent Sullivans now live, and where the Granville Tillsons lived back along. Although this letter is clearly dated February 19, 1833, the content might well be Judge Blank writing to Senator Blank begging the same consideration in 1963. I like to think that in 1833 it was purely a case of one man asking another for help — without the mink coat angle. There is no harm in dreaming, but it proves very little. Two brothers were begging for a pension in 1833. Can you imagine anything more 1963?

In a collection of various ephemera rescued by Arnold Shaw we find some old blotters bearing the name of T. C. Collins—Special Agent—Travellers Insurance Co., Middleborough, Mass., Nelson Barrows, Agent for the Union Mutual, and T. M. Ryder, of Wareham, Mass., agent for the Watertown Fire Insurance Co. In the same clutch of manuscript we find a bill dated 186[illegible] to Leonard & Barrows for blacksmiths' tools and railroad expenses to Sandwich. Ah history thy name is legion. (Of course I know I'm putting the average reader to sleep, but then, I may hit a Collins, a Barrows, a Ryder or a Leonard who might be interested in sending in the answers.)

From Tom Sena of Lakeville we have acquired a small collection of letters from various people, namely, George Bryant, C. S. Hunt, Welcome Young and Earle Sproat to Allen Danforth, Esq., of Plymouth. There was an Allen Danforth who was, or is generally conceded to have been, Plymouth's first printer. His first imprints appeared (to the best of my knowledge) about 1820. In this era we have proven many times that "one man in his time plays many parts" (apologies to Shakespeare), and this same Allen Danforth, printer, could have easily been a lawyer in his later years. A Lawyer? Oh, yes, I neglected to mention that all of these letters asked legal opinion.

On page 383 of Weston's History of the Town of Middleboro we find that "Henry Weston, whose home was with Captain Earl Sproat, served with distinction in the navy during the War of the Rebellion." WHERE was Weston's Store, attached for debts in 1844? N.B. In 1841 the postage from Middleborough to Plymouth was 5c, and in 1844 it had risen to 6c. What is all this talk about progress and change? In 1844 the U. S. Post Office was probably in the hole about $50,000.00 or so, and at that time it looked big. Today I think it would be safer if I didn't quote any figures; as someone once said, it's all comparative.

Who was Samuel Atwood? He sat in pew no. 64 in the new meeting house of the First Precinct, Middleborough as of "this thirty first day of March, 1829" — and what's more he paid for one sixth part of it according to the document given to us by Jesse W. Hall, signed by Harvey C. Thomas and witnessed by William Latham. The Church at the Green was built in 1828 and I feel sure there is little doubt that you can walk in and see pew no. 64 today where our venerable ancestor sat and worshipped. Mr. Hall also turned up a small collection of Middleborough history. Wilkes Wood, mentioned above, was administrator of Samuel Atwood's estate, and signed a printed form in 1840 demanding the sale of the personal estate for the benefit of his Widow, since said Widow had not been allowed "for necessaries" in the will. Samuel Atwood's "frock and trousers" (which maybe he wore to the Church at the Green in 1845) cost him $4.99, duly paid to Atwood L. Drew by his attorney, Eliah Ward. In the same schedule of bills we find that he was a fisherman by trade. A complete inventory of his estate in 1840, amounting to $1947.45 includes among other interesting possessions "1 Buffalo skin — $2.50." Although the bed, bedstead and bedding brought $24.00, the real estate and dwelling house with buildings etc. was the real value at $1770.00. I wonder what the decanters and "other glassware" listed at 75c would bring today? The Hall collection also includes the deed to the Samuel Atwood farm from James Cobb in 1827, being 90 acres in the South Purchase. In this deed we find that this farm was originally owned by Isaac Shaw. Where was it??

The Hall contribution to the museum collections however does not stop with the Atwood family. (I forgot to mention the silver coffin plate that reads: 'Samuel Atwood Died May 19th, 1840, Aged 57 Years) WHERE was the T. H. Alden Store? Thanks to the Halls we now have a small broadside in the P. T. Barnum style of copy, reading: "KNOW THYSELF, And the Place Where to TRADE CHEAP. — Spring and Summer Goods! ! Hosiery and Gloves! Newest Style Bonnets. French Lace, Ribbins, Flowers, Tabs — etc. Gentlemen's Furnishing Goods. Middleboro, May, 1850." T. H. Alden had imagination. "Terms Cash, and NO Deviation." There is a line between his Bonnets and his Gentlemen's Furnishing Goods that reads: --/???*o$o*--%$$$%--//%$$$--*o$o-. On television today this might be pictured differently, because there would be no question marks — it would read "More people use more Alden Bonnets, Gloves and Furnishings than any Others — period."

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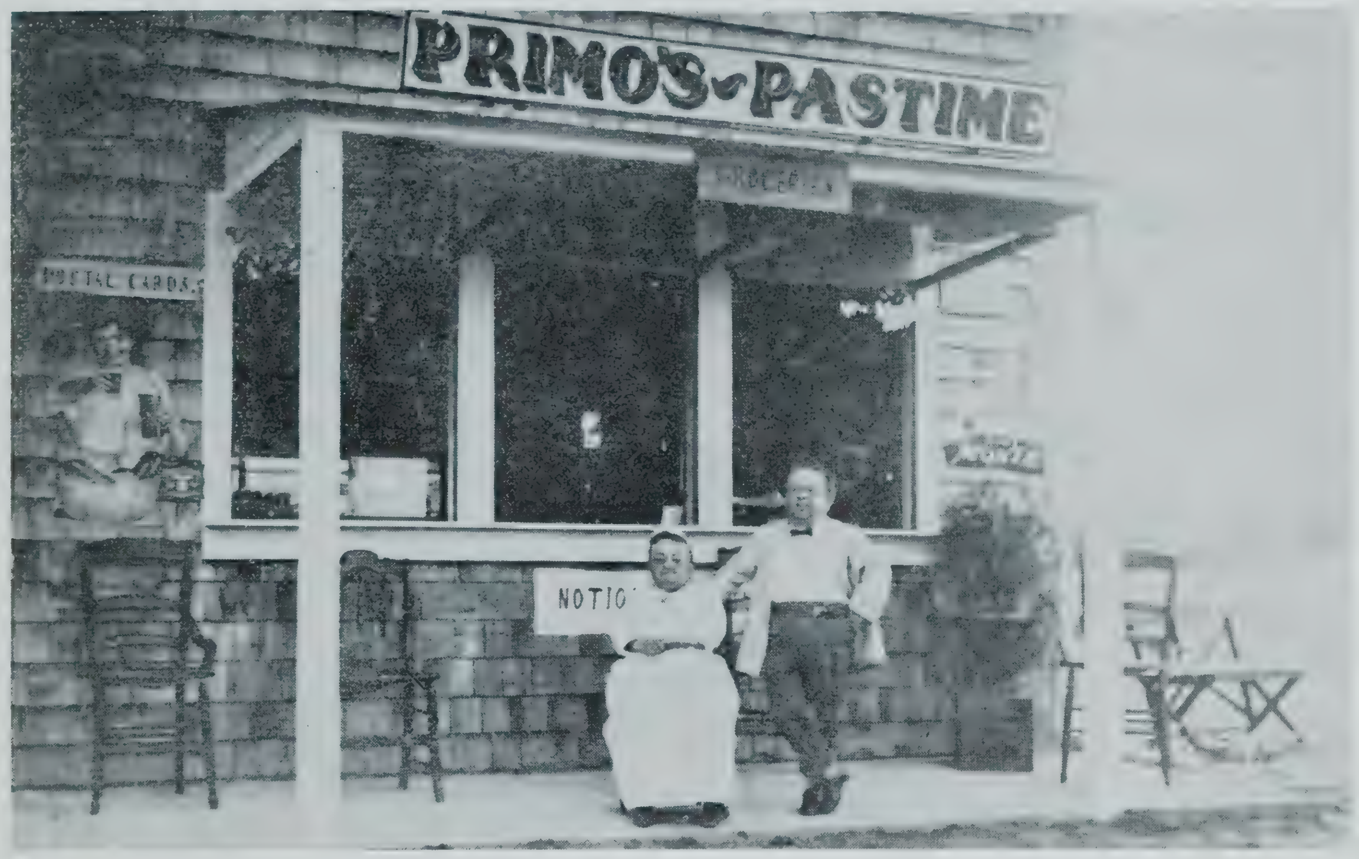

"PRIMO'S PASTIME"

This seems to be the only copy of a postal card showing Count and Countess Magri (the former Mrs. Tom Thumb, neé Lavinia Warren of Middleborough) in front of the little store that supported them after Lavinia's savings from her great days with P. T. Barnum were gone. Many Middleborough residents will remember the little shop. We are indebted to Lyman Butler for the discovery and the privilege of presenting it to you in this issue.

THREE IMPORTANT WOMEN IN THE HISTORY OF MIDDLEBOROUGH

by

Karyl Benson Swift

DEBORAH SAMPSON

The story of Deborah Sampson helps us, who live nearly two hundred years later, to understand the intense drama and romance of the American Revolution. Through the actions of this one woman we are able to feel the strength and courage of our ancestors, the trials and hardships and the patriotism. On the other hand, we also see the odd circumstances under which some either joined or managed to resist the fight. Deborah Sampson's story is sustained in the town of Middleborough through tradition and still exists today.

Deborah was born in Plympton on December 17, 1760, of honorable ancestry. One of these ancestors came to Plymouth in 1629 and had been a member of the English colony at Leyden.

Deborah's father died in a shipwreck when she was five. Her mother was unable to keep her family together so Deborah was shifted about for five years. For a while she lived with Mrs. Thatcher, widow of the Rev. Peter Thatcher. Then at the age of ten Deborah was bound to Jeremiah Thomas until she turned eighteen. In the Thomas family Deborah did farm chores and was eventually owner of a small flock of sheep to produce wool for her weaving.

Although Deborah grew up with other members of her own sex, she associated with the boys in the Thomas family since there were more boys than girls. This led her to pick up several masculine traits. She was quite athletic for an eighteenth century girl.

Deborah continued to live with the Thomas family until she was eighteen. At that time she was offered the job of teaching school at the Four Corners Village in Middleborough. She taught two summer sessions and during this time boarded with Abner Bourne who lived nearby.

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One evening Deborah donned men's clothing and joined the men at a local tavern. Rev. Stillman Pratt tells the story of this little fling and others have confirmed his tale as true. A negro woman named Jennie worked for Capt. Benjamin Leonard in Middleborough. Deborah Sampson stayed with Captain Leonard for a time. One evening, aided by Jennie, Deborah dressed herself in a suit of clothes belonging to the Captain's son Samuel and set out for town. Her first stop was at the recruiting office where she enlisted in the army under the name of Timothy Thayer. She received the bounty paid to recruits and headed for a tavern where she "drank and behaved in a very noisy and indecent manner." Later, she crept home to Jennie. In the morning, she returned to her female clothing and spent a good deal of the bounty on other clothes for herself.

When the time came for the enlisted men to join their regiments, one Timothy Thayer was nowhere to be found. His true identity was soon discovered, however, because an elderly woman at the recruiting office had remarked that he held his pen "as Deb Sampson did." Eventually Jennie admitted her part in the affair and Deborah was made to return the unspent part of the bounty.

Before her second enlistment, Deborah spent many hours making the decision. She hated to leave the Thomases who stuck by her even after her wild escapades and she was quite concerned over the worry she might cause her mother after she disappeared. Finally, she walked to Bellingham, Massachusetts, and enlisted under the name of Robert Shurtleiffe, which was the name of an older brother. On the way, she encountered other Middleborough acquaintances who did not recognize her in men's clothing so she felt quite safe. Her original plan was to travel about as a gentleman but lack of funds forced her to do what many young men were doing—join the army.

Deborah was sent to West Point where she participated in several raiding parties. In Tarrytown, New York, Deborah suffered a wound which she treated herself to avoid discovery. She suffered alone under the protests of the other soldiers until the wound healed. Deborah was then appointed orderly to General Patterson in Philadelphia. While there she contracted a fever and was forced to enter the hospital. The doctor who treated her promised not to reveal her secret, but he later revealed Deborah's true identity in letters to both Gen. George Washington and Gen. Patterson.

After her discharge, Deborah headed home but due to the threats of the Baptist Church in Middleborough, of which Deborah had been a member, she went to Stoughton, Massachusetts. Here she worked for a farmer and assumed the name of Ephriam Sampson. To amuse herself, she flirted with the country girls. In the Spring, Deborah again resumed her female identity and in April of 1784, married a farmer named Benjamin Gannet from Sharon. They had a son and two daughters but none possessed their mother's energy or thirst for adventure.

In 1783, Deborah had been granted an invalid bonus of one hundred dollars by the state of Massachusetts and in 1805 Congress granted her a pension of four dollars a month. In 1818, the pension was doubled until her death in 1827.

* * *

LAVINIA WARREN

The story of Middleboro's "little people" is as timeless as a fairy-tale and equally as popular. To fully appreciate Lavinia Warren, it is quite necessary to first meet her husband, Charles Stratton, who became famous as General Tom Thumb. Tom Thumb was a perfectly formed little man but he never attained a height of overy forty-five inches. He was discovered in his hometown of Bridgeport, Connecticut, at the age of four, by Phineas T. Barnum the great showman. Little Charles was entered in the American Museum which was forerunner to Barnum's circus. The museum showed off unusual people and was extremely popular. Barnum gave Charles the name General Tom Thumb and billed him as being eleven years old although he was not yet five years old.

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Tom Thumb and Barnum traveled widely. They were received by Queen Victoria on three different occasions. Later, Tom was made a partner to Barnum and at twenty-four, he was a very rich little midget.

Meanwhile, in Middleboro, another midget was born of normal-sized parents and christened Mercy Lavinia Bump. This little girl appeared no different than her six normal-sized brothers and sisters but as she reached her first birthday, her growth slowed and soon ceased. At the age of ten, Mercy was full grown. She measured thirty-nine inches high. A younger sister Minnie was even smaller. Mercy learned to sew, knit and cook like all other New England girls and grew very fond of music, art and poetry. At sixteen, she qualified to teach the third grade in Middleboro. Mercy Lavinia Warren was smaller than many of her pupils.

Women of this era were just discovering the value of femininity in the world and little Miss Bump decided to follow the trend and spent a summer aboard her cousin's Mississippi showboat. She returned to Middleboro and her teaching position in the fall, and would probably have lived a very quiet life there had not P. T. Barnum discovered her in 1862. Barnum managed to convince her family that she would never make any money teaching school and whisked her off to New York. Barnum changed her name to Lavinia Warren because he was quite certain no one would pay to see a midget named "Bump." The name Warren had been her mother's maiden name.

Tom Thumb was enjoying wide mid-western publicity and met Lavinia when he stopped in to see what was new at the Museum. After once meeting her he immediately went to Barnum and announced that he wanted to marry Lavinia. Barnum sensed the chance for publicity and quickly informed Tom of his competition. Commodore Nutt was another midget at the Museum. At eighteen he [illegible] twenty-four pounds and was a head shorter than [illegible] Tom Thumb. The Commodore had also fallen in love with Lavinia and had a bit of an advantage since he met her first. Barnum publicized the little

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triangle quite widely. A bit of rivalry between General Tom Thumb and Commodore Nutt interested the public, however, and the attractive Lavinia enjoyed every minute of it.

General Tom Thumb proposed to Lavinia Warren at P. T. Barnum's home and she accepted on the condition that her mother approved. Mrs. Bump did approve but only after being convinced it was not just a publicity stunt. After this, the Commodore proposed to Minnie Warren, Lavinia's sister, but was refused.

The wedding of Tom and Lavinia took place on Tuesday, February 10, 1863 in Grace Church, New York, and with Barnum in charge, the publicity hit the front pages. The two thousand wedding guests included such dignitaries as members of the cabinet and Foreign Ministers. The wedding itself was performed by Dr. I. W. Putnam, pastor of Miss Warren's church in Middleboro, Rev. Junius Willey, rector of St. John's church where Charles was christened and Dr. Thomas H. Taylor, rector of Grace church. Tiny Lavinia marched down the aisle looking radiantly beautiful in a satin gown. Her many jewels were gifts of the groom. Her star-shaped bouquet was made to order at his request. Minnie Warren served as maid-of-honor and Commodore Nutt swallowed his pride to act as best man for the General. The tiny couple stood atop a grand piano to receive their guests at the reception.

After the wedding, the young couple traveled to Washington, D. C., to meet President and Mrs. Lincoln. Soon, Barnum wanted them to go on tour to Europe with Minnie and the Commodore. General Tom Thumb was tired of traveling by then but consented to go to please Lavinia who had not yet had the opportunity. They were received by all royalty of Europe as well as dignitaries of the United States. These perfectly formed little people were not only a novelty, but they were also entertaining and lively conversationalists. On one tour, they became known in Australia, India and Japan.

At last, General and Mrs. Tom Thumb settled down in New England. They built a home in Middleboro and alternated between there and Charles' home in Bridgeport. The story that the Tom Thumb's had a child was merely a hoax perpetrated by Barnum. Minnie Warren had married and died giving birth to a six pound child. Lavinia was unable to have any children of her own and after Minnie's death, fled from Middleboro to forget.

General Tom Thumb died of a stroke at the age of forty-five. He was buried in Bridgeport's Mountain Grove Cemetery under a forty-foot shaft of Italian marble topped with a life-sized statue of himself.

Lavinia was left a widow with very little money. She toured the country with a midget opera company, popped up in Lilliputian villages at World's Fairs and even made four movie comedies. Two years later, she married Count Primo Magri, an Italian dwarf. For a time they lived in Marion, Ohio, in an exhibition home stocked with midget furniture. Then they turned Lavinia's Middleboro home into a general store for tourists and wintered in Coney Island among the fat ladies and India-rubber men.

Lavinia Warren died in 1919 at the age of seventy-eight. She is buried beside her husband under a small headstone marked, "His Wife."

NINA LOUISE SEYMOUR

Nina Louise Seymour is the only woman who will be named on the new Middleboro War Memorial. This is but one indication of the pride Middleboro people have in Nina Seymour, Registered Nurse.

Nina was born in Erving, Massachusetts and moved to Middleboro with her family when she was fifteen years old. She graduated from the Middleboro High School in the class of 1910. After high school Nina entered nurse's training at Hart Private Hospital in Roxbury. For the next five years Miss Seymour served as district nurse in Middleboro. By this time, World War I had broken out and the strong feelings of patriotism that developed apparently gripped Middleboro's young nurse. Nina chose to join the Red Cross Nursing Corps in June of 1918.

She sailed for France late in the summer but her new career was far too short, for only one month after her arrival at U. S. Base Hospital 82 in Toul, she contracted pneumonia. The army medical personnel administered excellent care but to no avail. She was buried in Toul, France for seven months and then her body was sent home to Middleboro. Services were conducted at the Church of Our Savior by the Rev. J. Gordon Carey, rector. Since then she has remained at rest beside her father in Central Cemetery.

The citizens of the town contributed $750 for a bronze plaque to be erected in memory of their war heroine. The plaque was purchased, incribed and hung in the Middleboro Public Library. In 1959 the library's executive board voted to remove the plaque from the wall since the space was needed and the District Nursing Associtation no longer met there. In 1962 Mrs. Frances Wiksten, a reporter for the New Bedford Standard Times, inquired as to the whereabouts of the plaque. It was discovered that it had been stored in the library attic with other historic memorabilia. The American Legion of Middleboro, of which Nina was once a member, also took interest in the issue and removed the plaque from its dusty resting place. The plaque has since been sand-blasted and hung in the corridor outside the office at St. Luke's Hospital in Middleboro. This appears to be a proper resting place for a plaque in memory of a nurse.

(Paper delivered at a meeting of the Middleborough Historical Association, November 4, 1963)

Editor's Note. Although many books, booklets and articles have been published about Tom and Lavinia, we feel that Mrs. Swift's story is more intimate and local, and deserves a lasting place in print. From such booklets as "Sketch of the Life, Personal Appearance, Character and Manners of Charles S. Stratton, The Man in Miniature, known as General Tom Thumb, and his wife Lavinia Warren Stratton — etc." New York: 1867 — and P. T. Barnum's own "Struggles and Triumphs of Forty Years" New York 1870 — to many more recent articles in such publications as the New-York Historical Society Quarterly, Yankee Magazine and many others, there is a wealth of both historical and pleasant reading available — BUT — it is mostly about Tom. (I assume you are all familiar with Mertie Witbeck's story in the Antiquarian Vol. V, No. 3 for last June.) Copies of Vol. V, No. 3 are still at the Museum in the Peirce Grocery Store for sale at 25c each while they last.)

This house wasn't and isn't on Thompson street, but it was built ca. 1740-50, is still standing, and is a good example of the architecture of the period of which Lyman Butler remembers and writes. Unless others try to remember now, most of those we have left will be destroyed by fire or progress, and there will be no record.

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REMINISCENCES

by

Lyman Butler

THOMPSON STREET FIFTY YEARS AGO

Having spent several years of my early childhood in the Thompsonville section of Middleborough, I can recall Thompson street when it was quite different than it is today. Although several of the older houses have been destroyed by fire, the old street probably is as well populated as it was fifty years ago. I will start at the Halifax line and try to picture the houses and names as I remember them.

The first buildings were those of the Weatherbee Farm on the northwest corner of River street. This farm is located on the 1855 map as the J. Thompson place, and is presently operated by a Mr. Burroughs; I believe he is a son-in-law of Mr. Weatherbee. The old Wood place, located on the 1855 map as I. Tinkham, was later occupied by a Chace family and stood about a hundred feet towards town on the opposite side. My Brother Philip was born here in 1903. Though the old home was burned down many years ago, you can still see the old fireplace bricks and the cellar hole.

A short distance along on the same side stood a house occupied by the Cooks. This was located on the 1855 map as the I. Harlow farm. Next to this was the Ansel Flander's house, shown on the old maps under the name of G. Atwood. Both of these are gone, and all that stands as a marker is the old barn. Maria Atwood lived across the street in what was originally the J. Atwood homestead. This house is still standing and is occupied by Arthur Turner. Carol Washburn lived in the old R. B. Kimball place a short distance along on the same side. The old cedar hedge alone stands to recall and tell the tale.

There were no more houses until after we cross the Plain street intersection. In a field on the east side of the road stood a large house located on the old map as the S. Harlow place. In my time this was lived in by the Wentworths; today it is a large pasture, and part of the Clarence Porter farm. This next farmhouse is located on the 1855 map as the F. Thatcher house, and the farm operated by the Johnstons; Mrs. Johnston is a daughter of Mr. Wolski who ran the farm for so many years.

In 1855 the S. Hinckley place stood way back from the road directly opposite the F. Thatcher home. It had long since been destroyed by fire fifty years ago, but we kids took many a walk across lots to this spot. At that time it was known as the site of the old Morton place and the entrance really ran in from Plain street, near Morton Hill.

Opposite the Porter house (1855—I. Thatcher) stood Elmwood Farm annex occupied by Barkley Kinsman. This has been gone a good many years and only a cellar hole is visible today. In 1855 this was the P. Thompson home. Next came the Austin Thompson place, originally J. H. Thompson's (1855). Later the Nitz family lived there. Nothing remains today to show where these buildings once stood. When buildings caught fire backalong the only parts saved were the cellars, and even if man didn't fill them with trash and truck, nature in her own sweet way soon mended the landscape with natural growth.

Next on our route came Dwight Kinsman's Elmwood Farm, located in 1855 under the name of P. Thompson. Today Fred Blanchard operates this farm. Danson Brook separates the place from the old Fogg place, known as the J. Thompson home in 1855. I lived there for several years, and today Edward Freeman operates a dairy there. Nearly in back, up an old driveway, was a cellar hole. Since there is nothing shown on the 1855 map at this spot, I would assume this building had been burned many years before, leaving no record but the old cellar. According to Weston's History, George Danson lived between Danson Brook and the G. Thompson place (Antiquarian—Vol. V, No. 2, page 7), and it seems possible to me that this may represent the last record of his home. Kinsman Brothers Dairy used this cellar hole for a dump, and I doubt if even this old stone record is visible today.

On the opposite side of the road we come next to Frank Kinsman's home, formerly R. Thompson's place. The Griffins live here today. Crossing the road again and a little way along stands the old home of Benjamin Franklin Thompson. Harold Gates, Sr. and his family now live here. Back across the old street again (Ed's. note: hard to keep up with this chicken but his crossings do have more reason than most), we come to the home of Alice Reed. This is the old I. W. Thompson place, and is at present used by Harold Gates as a hen house. (Ed's. note: O Tempora O Mores — moral: better a hen house with original 18th century panelling than a cellar hole.) Back again over the old highway we come to the E. Dean home, then occupied by Orrin Deane, who ran a dairy and chicken farm. Today Arthur Benson operates a dairy farm here, and lives just south in the house known as George Dean's place. Since this house is not located on the 1855 map, we can assume it is the youngest building on the old street so far. Next came the old Thompsonville School house where I put in quite a few years. This is now part of the Arthur Benson farm and is the active center of Thompsonville where the 4-H Clubhouse and also a civic center for other groups — the well known and popular 4-H Fairs are held here — and incidentally (Here's that blooming editor again) if it hadn't been for Lyman Butler and Art Benson there wouldn't have been any museum auction last Summer! (The Orrin Deane place included during its early years an up and down sawmill, and later an active shoe-shop.)

Moseying along to the corner of Precinct street we come to the Fred Hanson place, formerly the old C. Hagan homestead. At present the Condons live here. On the south corner the Harold Fawcett family occupied the T. J. Wood Farm where today G. McCarthy operates another dairy. Sitting way back in a large field along a ways stood the old G. Thompson place where I lived my first few years in Thompsonville. This building is pictured in Weston's History (page 387) but burned to the ground years ago, but you can still find the cellar holes of both house and barn.

Next came the Andrew Freeman Farm, originally the Freeman Fuller homestead and now occupied by the Clinton Gates family. Mrs. Gates is a daughter of Andrew Freeman. According to Mrs. Gates the building was used as a garrison against the Indians backalong. A small section of the original walls are filled with stones and brick, and though this seems to be the only basis for the legend, even national history is based on less tangible facts. Who is to say the rest of the four walls were NOT so constructed. Must we tear the old house apart?

Alton Freeman, Son of Andrew Freeman lived across the road in the old house now occupied by Manuel Covacco. Next to this home lived the Almeida Fullers, now occupied by Russell Freeman. Neither of these buildings are shown on the 1855 map, making a total of only three Thompsonville houses built after 1855. Across the road on the bend stood the Fred Bliss home, once known as the J. Washburn place, and now lived in by the Santos family. Next came the Kingsland Brothers' Farm, originally the Cornish homestead, and now operated as a stable for training race horses by a Mr. Hendriche. On the curve of old Thompson road which was made a dead-end when it was rebuilt stood the Hunter farm, formerly known as the E. L. Shaw home; the Massey family live here today. Over the road stood the old A. Thompson place, in my time run by Arthur Standish and known as the Standish Farm, but presently occupied by David Blanchard.

On the corner of Fuller street stood the Forrest Standish paint shop. This building is still standing, and sitting back from the street on the opposite corner was the Ralph Delano house, formerly known as the A. Thompson place. The last house on Thompson street at the junction of Plympton was Chester Fuller's home. This was originally located as the D. Lucas place; it is now occupied by one of Mr. Fuller's Sons.

If you will glance back through a roster of the original names of the builders and owners you will understand why Thompsonville was and still is Thompsonville. The 1855 map

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alone locates nine Thompson homesteads. Though new homes have been built, Thompson street or road still maintains its historical identity. May it live on for years to come despite double barreled highways and other progress.

OLD SWIMMING PLACES ON THE NEMASKET

There were several places in the old days to take a duck in the Muttock River as we kids always called it. One of the most popular was the old bridge at Muttock. The water was deep on the west side, and you could swim under the railroad bridge and a good ways up the river. Then down stream a short distance under the railroad bridge was Packard's swimming hole. This was popular with all ages because the shore fell off slowly making for good paddling or swimming at all depths.

Farther along off Plymouth street was Bumps, formerly owned by Mrs. Tom Thumb's family. This was shallow for the youngsters, but further down a few hundred feet beyond Plymouth was Ludens, so called, and down at the Muttock street bridge was a deep pool used by the more confident and experienced swimmers.

When I first started going to these old swimming holes, we always went in our birthday suits but in later years the other sex took up swimming, and we had to wear trunks or swim suits. All of these places are closed today for one reason or another, and of course everyone has a car in which to skoot off to more fashionable spots. (Ed. note: I well remember what our gang in Morristown, N.J., used to call the "Pink Lady." It was a deep hole in a stream that ran around the old golf course, and as Lyman says, we never, never thought of trunks until one day while swimming a lady artist sneaked into our premises and set up her easel about fifty feet away. That did it.)

OLD PLYMOUTH STREET AT MUTTOCK

If you enter Plymouth from the Green, headed toward Muttock, and wend your way to the bend opposite the entrance to Fred Friedenfeld's Ja-Mer Turkey Ranch, you will see, looking to the right across the field, where the old original road ran. It stands out very clearly between the old trees that lined its sides. This road went right by the Abiel Washburn home and crossed Precinct street where the old school stood, and comes out at the Picone farm. Nemasket street came down Muttock Hill and went by the old store and on up to meet Plymouth in front of the Washburn place. The new road or present road, has been in use ever since I can remember.

As a youngster I knew of some cellar holes over in back of the Washburn place and recently took a hike to look them over again. There is a road almost opposite the Ja-Mer Ranch up in the woods, and these old cellar holes were only a short way in. I have been told that the buildings that stood on these old foundations belonged to the Sproat family who at one time owned most of Muttock before Judge Peter Oliver took over, so to speak. They are still open to view and unfilled in or covered. I used this old road until it became almost impassable with brush and young trees, and often went on through to Precinct, or, taking a right turn followed it through Meetinghouse Swamp to the Green.

I wrote the above notes before the new route 44 was started, and the day it opened took a ride to look things over and see what progress had accomplished. At the Muttock section I went right by the garden lot we planted when I was a teenager; my old home, the Washburn Store, was of course missing. However, both the Oliver and Washburn homes show up plainly, and we can be thankful that they have been preserved for coming generations. The old home where the Gabreys lived is gone, and the river bed has been changed to satisfy the state engineers. Progess? Yes, I suppose so, but the new scene made me feel kind of sad and made me realize that my old stamping grounds were wiped out forever.

THREE IMPORTANT MEN IN THE HISTORY OF MIDDLEBOROUGH

Ernest E. Thomas

In writing about three prominent men in Middleborough I have chosen one from the colonial and Revolutionary War period, one from the Revolutionary to the Civil War period, and one from our modern times. The three I have chosen are not necessarily the three most prominent men of their time, but they are men who played an important part in the history of the town.

My first choice is Rev. Isaac Backus who came to North Middleborough in about 1746 as pastor of the Congregational Church which he served for about ten years. He then became pastor of the Baptist Church there which he served for fifty more years. The church in North Middleborough was the nineteenth Baptist Church in Massachusetts at the time it was reorganized by Elder Backus.

Elder Backus became very active in the Baptist movement. In the 1760's two other Baptist churches were organized in Middleborough — the second Baptist Church which was located in what is now Lakeville and the third which was and is located at Rock. Elder Backus was interested in the organization of these churches and others in this area. In 1771 he was made agent for all the Baptist churches in Massachusetts.

Impressive as his record of over sixty years in the ministry in this vicinity may be, his activities reached out into other fields of endeavor. His salary as pastor probably was not more than $200 a year and he certainly lived on a bigger income than that. He was a good business man as his account book shows. One activity of his was buying and selling to the several foundries in the region, Judge Oliver's and others. He would contract for lumber from those who owned woodland, sell the lumber to the foundries and take his pay in iron-ware and then sell the pots and kettles to those who dealt in iron products.

He was also an author who had around fifty books printed. Most of these were sermons or theological treatises. He wrote a history of the Christian churches in New England in three volumes, and then wrote a condensed one volume of the same work. His account book shows where he placed an order at one time for one thousand copies of the abridged history. He sold all of these histories for at least $10 per volume which gave him a very handsome profit. Some of his books he sold through agents but many he placed in his saddle-bags when he went on his numerous trips through the country, as far south as the Carolinas, and these he sold without the need of any agent.

He was very active in politics. He went to the First Continental Congress at Philadelphia in 1774. He was not a delegate of the colony; he maybe went as agent of the Baptist churches in Massachusetts, or maybe he went just as an individual. At any rate he was there and took part in some of the discussion. This Congress was not a legislative body but rather a convention to consider the grievances the Colonies had against England and to try to get more cooperation from the mother country. Meeting soon after the Boston Tea Party, it failed in this endeavor and within a year the Revolutionary War had begun; the Second Continental Congress came into being and directed the conduct of the War. Elder Backus did not attend the Second Continental Congress but he did go to the Massachusetts Convention that was called to vote on the Constitution of the United States. Elder Backus fought in this Convention against religious requirements for officials in the new government. He was probably as instrumental as any one man in establishing the principle of separation of church and state.

Rev. Isaac Backus was not a graduate of any college although he was a widely-read man. When he was nearly seventy-five years old Brown University granted him an honorary degree of Master of Arts.

Elder Backus died in 1806 and he is buried in the cemetery close by the North Middleborough Congregational Church.

About seventy-five years ago an impressive monument was erected over his grave. It is visited by many people annually, especially those who look upon him as one of the pioneers in the development of the Baptist Church in America.

My second selection was made after considerable thought—Colonel Peter H. Peirce. His permanent influence on Middleborough was largely brought about after his death and was something of which he was unaware and had not planned. Most of his influence on the town was due to the fact that the fortune he built up was left to the town of Middleborough by his son Thomas S. Peirce.

Colonel Peter Peirce was an outstanding business man. Not only did he operate a large and successful general store but he was also interested in real estate and in several of the foundries that flourished in this vicinity. He was also interested in politics and served several times in the General Court. He was interested in military affairs and served in the War of 1812 and later in the local militia where he gained the title of colonel.

I suspect that his brother Levi Peirce did as much for his own generation as did Colonel Peter Peirce and maybe more. Levi Peirce developed the present business center of Middleborough, was postmaster for thirty-two years, helped organize the Baptist Church in Middleborough and gave generously to the church as well as for the formation of Peirce Academy.

I decided, nevertheless, to write about Peter rather than Levi. Certainly the money left to the town by Thomas S. Peirce has done many things for the town that the town would not have done for itself. A fund of $500,000 was given to the town to be handled by a board of trustees and used for the betterment of the town. Also about $100,000 was left for a public library. Half of this amount was for the erection of a building and the rest was set aside, the income from which was for the purchase of books. As a result of this particular gift Middleborough has one of the best public libraries for a town of its size to be found anywhere in the state.

The trustees of the Peirce Fund have done many things for the town. The business course in the high school was set up by them and for several years the salary of the head of that department was paid from this fund. The business department still is helped by this money. The various school bands have had great help, particularly in the securing of uniforms. The playground was set up in part by money from this bequest and the summer playground program gets a great deal of help. As a result, Middleborough has one of the best summer playground programs to be found in Massachusetts. The Peirce Estate carried a large share of the cost of the present fire station and the remodelling of the Peirce store into the present sightly Court House and Police Station.

These are only some of the many things done by the trustees of the Peirce Estate over the past sixty years. The fund still exists and many more things will be done in the future for the benefit of the town.

I might add that the late Chester Weston who was employed by Thomas S. Peirce had a good deal to do with bringing Mr. Peirce to think of leaving his money, or a large part of it, to the town of Middleborough.

The third person I am going to write about is Walter Sampson. Probably a third of the people living in Middleborough today knew Mr. Sampson as a wonderful teacher and as a disciplinarian whose methods were both successful and unique. He was principal of Middleborough High School for over thirty years, and I never heard of a parent or pupil who ever spoke of him except in terms of the highest praise and appreciation.

Mr. Sampson was born in Lakeville on the day the Battle of Fredericksburg was being fought. He attended Middleborough High School and graduated in 1882. During the time he was in high school he walked daily from his home to the school and back again, a distance of seven miles each morning and night. He went to Dartmouth College from which he graduated in 1886.

It is interesting to note that in the period from 1880 to 1890 at least four graduates of Middleborough High School went to Dartmouth, and this was a period when it was not a very common practice for boys to go to college, especially country boys. Three of these, at least, were country boys: Judge Nathan Washburn was one of the class of 1882, my uncle Lyman Thomas was 1884 and Walter Sampson and George Stetson were 1886.

The modern Middleborough High School was established in 1873 and the first class to graduate from it was the class of 1876. A Dartmouth graduate, James H. Willoughby, was the principal at this time and was here for a period of maybe fifteen years. He was a good school man and made Middleborough High School into a school with an excellent reputation. Undoubtedly it was his influence that sent these boys up into the north country for a college education.

After Mr. Sampson graduated in 1886 he taught school in Vermont for several years. It was there he was married. He came to Middleborough in 1890 and immediately began his long and outstanding career. It has been said that Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and a boy on the other end made a college. In much the same way it could be said that Walter Sampson made a high school. He was interested in his pupils and it was his encouragement that caused so many of them to go to college. His own alma mater was the school a great many of them chose to attend. He loaned a good many boys money so that they could finish their college course, and Mr. Leonard Tillson told me that out of all the money he loaned in this way he lost less than $100.

Mr. Sampson, as I have noted, encouraged a good many boys to go to Dartmouth College. He did this without thinking whether or not they would help out the football team in its annual struggles with Princeton and Harvard. Finally Dartmouth College awarded him the honorary degree of Master of Pedagogy, a particular honor, for the degree was created for him; it was never given before and has never been awarded since.

Mr. Sampson's influence on this town over a period of thirty years was terrific. I doubt if any man over a period of equal length was ever so great a force for good in Middleborough; and yet Mr. Sampson was essentially a very modest and unassuming man. He never held any elective office although he was a member of the Board of Library Trustees. He never travelled very far afield, and I suppose his name was known to few people outside of Middleborough, yet his influence was immense. Sampy was truly one of the rarest of individuals — a great teacher.

He lies buried across the road from his beloved home at Mullein Hill in Lakeville where he used to go and work in his orchard. He lies under a stone as simple and as unpretentious as was the man himself. The inscription on the stone reads — with no embellishments —

WALTER SAMPSON

(Delivered at a meeting of the Middleborough
Historical Association, November 4, 1963)

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THE CASE OF THE GUN CARRIAGE WHEELS

JUNE 10th, 1775

Lawrence B. Romaine

In the archives of the Middleborough Historical Museum sits a letter written by Judge Peter Oliver to Governor-elect Stephen Hopkins of Rhode Island and Providence Plantation on June 10th, 1755. It is otherwise unknown to American history, except that it was once reprinted in 1939 in an issue of the American Autograph Journal and therein offered for sale. From the unusual contents of this letter I present a questionable brief of the case.

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Back in 1755 before the rumors and tremors of the War of the American Revolution, Judge Peter Oliver and the Widow King of Taunton were waging their own little war against one Captain Reed of Newport, Rhode Island. I hope you will agree that it deserves preservation in print in our Antiquarian, and further that others may be goaded to investigate and provide us with the decision and final settlement.

Let me introduce the characters in this little drama of our eighteenth century, ladies first, of course. In 1723 John King, merchant, of Taunton, Mass., formed a joint stock company for the erection of the fifth iron works in the Old Colony, and the first to manufacture hollow ware. This agreement was drawn up February 25, 1723, between John King and Ebenezer Robinson of Taunton, Benjamin Hodges and Elkanah Leonard of Middleborough, and, Samuel and William Tubbs of Pembroke. This group of men represented a varied and knowledgeable cross section of industry: a merchant, a yeoman, a carpenter, a bloomer and two founders. Robinson, Hodges, Leonard and the Tubbs Brothers each owned 1/16th share, and John King who owned the land situated on Littleworth Brook kept 11/16 for himself. When John King died, his widow being the majority shareholder, carried on. Whether Judge Oliver owned any shares, or whether he was merely being a good neighbor, is not known to the best of my knowledge. (See archives and collections of the Old Colony Historical Society, Taunton, Mass.)

In 1744 Peter Oliver moved to Muttock in Middleborough and was shortly appointed Judge of the Inferior Court of Plymouth County, later becoming Chief Justice of the Superior Court in Massachusetts Bay Colony. He purchased land, water rights, and the then existing grist mills on the Nemasket River. His home, Oliver Hall, was one of the finest in the Colonies — a showplace known for its grand hospitality and friendly atmosphere. His furnaces, foundries and forges represented one of the outstanding industrial enterprises of Colonial New England. He cast howitzers and other military supplies for the Crown before the Revolution during the French and Indian War, and in spite of his loyalty to his King to which many of us Yankees still take exception, was without any question Middleborough's foremost citizen of the 18th century. (See Weston's History, The Antiquarian Vol. V, No. 3, Eayrs, and Massachusetts Historical Society—Oliver Family Papers).

Stephen Hopkins of Rhode Island hardly needs an introduction to students of American history. Governor-elect of the Colony, and later Signer of the Declaration of Independence for his State, member of the first and second Continental Congresses and a close friend of Benjamin Franklin, Stephen Hopkins stands out as one of the founders of our Nation. (Dictionary of American Biography).

Captain Reed's birth and death historically seem to be recorded only in this letter. The portrait painted by Judge Oliver's pen may not be a true likeness, and yet it is all we have. One can imagine that the captain was under great pressure from "top brass" to procure gun carriage wheels at any cost — and yet in this case why was he so anxious to drive a bargain, and even perhaps get the wheels at **no** cost? In what fleet or regiment did he hold the title captain? Was he a later edition of the famous Captain Kidd? Will we ever know?

And now ladies and gentlemen of the jury you have before you the judge, the two plaintiffs and the defendant. The evidence — ah yes. Read carefully and thoughtfully the following exact copy of this letter. Read between the lines too. Decide not only whether Captain Reed was a scoundrel, but consider the manufacture of gun carriage wheels in Middleborough and Taunton in 1755. Why is there no other record?

To the Honble. Stephen Hopkins Esq.
Governour of the Colony of Rhode Island
& Providence Plantation
Middleborough, June 10th, 1755

Sir!

As I formerly had a personal Acquaintance with you, & as you are promoted to the Chief Seat of Government in Rhode Island Colony (on which I heartily congratulate you,) I would therefore beg leave to mention an affair to you which relates to your Government & on which I expect a difference with a Committe Man of it. The case is this Sir! Sometime since, one Capt. Reed of Newport came to a Furnace in Taunton, in which I am concerned with one Mrs. King a Widow & desired to have a quantity of Gun Carriag Wheels cast for him & would have agreed upon a price for them; but she being unacquainted with the making such sort of Ware, refused to agree upon a Price, & was in Doubt whether She could make them at all; but Capt. Reed being urgent for them, she told him that she would endeavour to make them, & when she had tried would then fix a price; accordingly after we had tried, we fixed the Price at the Rate of £26.13/4 our Currency per Tun, & he desired they might be sent to New Port & insisted hard to have one half sent as soon as possible, since they were much wanted: Upon which we exerted our Selves to serve your Colony, & met with such Disappointments, which if we had foreseen, we should not have undertaken the Business. A great Part of the wheels were sent down & the Clerk of the Furnace went down about them, but when he was at New Port, Ct. Reed saw him, treated him roughly & would not stand to the Bargain. He went a second Time & was treated much worse than at the first, & threatened with having them forcibly taken from him. Capt. Reed pretends one Mr. Thacher was a Witness to a Bargain with Mrs. King, but Mr. Thacher offers his oath to the contrary & declares he never heard any price agreed upon. On our parts we have the evidence to the foregoing Price, which was the lowest that ever our Government gave for the same Ware, & for which they had given even £40 lawfull Mony pr Tun. While we were casting your Wheels the Government of Connecticut (by a Person who came down on purpose) offered us the above Price, but we refused it, partly as we had not cast yours, & also because we could not afford them at that Price; & the above Price is so far from being unreasonable, that large Quantities of Shot have been lately cast at the Furnaces, for this Province (& we are now going to cast more) at £20 per Tun, which I believe Sir, you must be sensible are not one half the Trouble in casting.

The foregoing is a true State of the case Sir, & I only mention it to you, that in case Capt. Reed should represent it in another Light to your Assembly, as I understand he intends to do, this may be a Reply to him; for these facts may be relied on: as for his personal Reflections on me, I heartily despise him. If Abusive Language to & ill Treatment of a modest, honest Man (the Bearer hereof) who is clerk to our Furnace & has had Interviews with him, will give him a Title to the Wheels, he has certainly as good a Claim to them as any Man living; but if the Common Law of England will give us a Right to the Value of them it is not the ill Manners & Rudeness of Capt. Reed that will deter us from seeking Justice to our Selves.

I hope Sir! you will excuse my Freedom in giving you the Trouble of this Letter, as it was the Civility I formerly met with at your House which encouraged me to it, & which if you would put in in my Power to return, you will lay a new Obligation on Sir.

Your very humble Servant
Peter Oliver

This concludes the evidence. Whether Captain Reed dared to bring the matter before the "Government" and why he was considered a "Committe Man of it" there is no way of knowing. Did they have a "huddle in the Judge's chambers," and did the governor tell the captain he'd better pay up or "git?" Are there letters covered with dust in some attic that might complete the story, or have they been relegated to paper drives?

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The Oliver Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society archives do not have any manuscript material for 1755, and none with any data from about 1753 to 1760. Newport — Providence — can you help?

Cast iron gun carriage wheels? I have hunted through volumes for the term with no success; how about **you?** Consider the huge old wagon wheels of oak with merely an iron tire. Ever lift one? Imagine such a wheel of cast iron; I can think of no military accessory more impractical, yet in 1755 Judge Oliver and the Widow King attempted to manufacture them **right here** in Middleborough and Taunton. From the letter we can rest assured that no more gun carriage wheels were attempted, but whether the reason was the lack of a ready and paying market, or the difficulty in making proper moulds, the texture of bog iron, or the useless weight is still an unanswered puzzle. Judge Oliver did find that bog iron was too brittle for howitzers and cannon, and imported "mountain iron" for this branch of manufacture. Yet for hollow ware — i.e. kettles, spiders, pots and kitchen ware — I imagine it did very well as long as Mother didn't throw it at Father in a rage because he stayed at the Sproat Tavern too long of an evening — and of course too, if her aim was good and true, probably the kettle survived even if Father didn't — on the other hand if the poor old kettle wound up against the stone or brick chimney, it might have shattered into a dozen pieces — of bog iron.

These notes remind me of an article I once wrote for Old Time New England. A friendly critic observed that it was inconclusive and proved nothing — why write it? My answer is that I write this story and we publish it in the hope that others with more time and patience **may** solve the case for us. Q. E. D.

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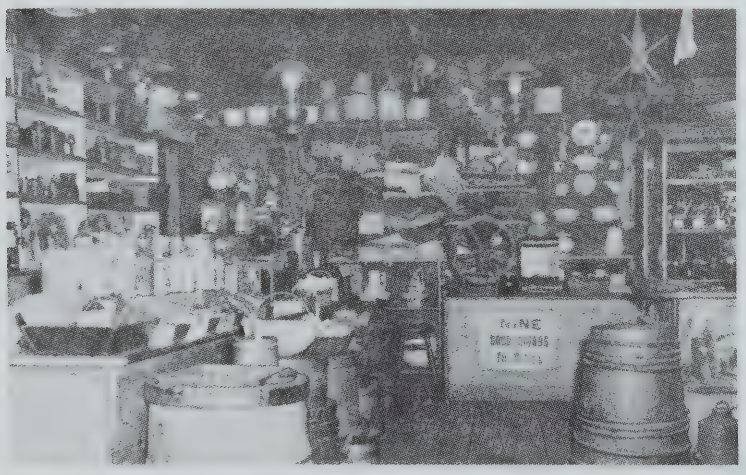
MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN'S DISTRIBUTION

It might be of interest to our advertisers as well as our membership to know that The Antiquarian is now being regularly mailed to our "senior" historical organizations, state libraries and the largest reference libraries in the Country. Although our circulation is only 1200 copies it is safe to say we are covering the top historical Americana points from coast to coast.

It is also gratifying to know that many of them have subscribed during the past two years, and others have sent their own bulletins, circulars, quarterlies and other publications in appreciation. In time these now current organs of the Nation's history will be filed in our library and provide in themselves a reference collection of which we will be justly proud in the years to come.



The old country stores of our 19th century have been rescued and have become a living part of America's historical museums. To the best of my knowledge this was the first one properly set up for the education of future generations of students and historians. WE know where it was. Do you? Photograph taken ca. 1935.

"THOU SHALT GIVE EAR TO TEN MODERN COMMANDMENTS FOR HISTORICAL SOCIETIES"

(From "HISTORY NEWS" American Association for State and Local History Vol. XIX, No. 2 December 1963)

N.B. Although I have trimmed these commandments developed by Miss Ella F. Wood, executive director of the Connecticut League of Historical Societies to the marrow to save space (and linotype costs!), I have tried to leave enough of the bone structure to brace and sturdy historical organizations who may not be members. If **you** do not — why not? The membership is a widow's mite compared to the value of **History News** alone.

1. Choose a president who is an administrator — NOT just a lover of old things.
2. Elect officers for two-year terms — good officers get tired.
3. Elect officers who will really serve (and work) — **not** just lend their names.
4. Elect a secretary for one or three year terms so as not to coterminate with the president. Select a good typist.
5. State your purpose in your constitution: i.e. historic preservation and historic education. This will limit the number and character of your membership.
6. Have a bulletin or news-letter **at least** twice a year.
7. Set up your program a year in advance; send it to all members.
8. Start with committee members — **not** just a chairman — developing a pool from which to draw new executives.
9. Get experts for certain key jobs — with training and experience. Good publicity is vital, — raising money is a job for experts. **Draw in juniors** — give them jobs that will interest them — an expert in dealing with teenagers is required.
10. Incorporate for safety and tax exemption — and — join your state historical league **AND** your national association.

(The trouble is that such **MUST** advice is always published in historical bulletins and periodicals, and therefore read only by those (for the most part) who want to live up to such commandments. If such publications could be distributed more widely, **and read** by the historically **un**educated and **un**interested, the preservation of American history might really compete with politics, prize fights, sports, gambling and whiskey! Such TV programs as those put on by Greenfield Village this morning (Jan. 12th) can do more good than anything in these modern days of atomic buttons, easy chairs and lazy, easy to "set and watch" entertainment. Ed. note)

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MUSEUM NEWS

News? Do they have news in Alaska and at the North Pole? Oh, I suppose they do, but then they're used to this zero weather, and I'll bet they have at least a stove beside the typewriters and the printing presses. Down on dear old Jackson at our museum buildings the air is not only zero, it's dead to boot. The stove in the Peirce Store has a stove pipe that just sits in the wall and **don't you dare** light a fire in the durned thing. So — that's the way it is Folks — and yet you ask "What's new besides all the other junk you told us about last time?"

Let's see. We did have a window breaking epidemic but it died with the score only three after Lyman Butler put on the screens. Last week four more huge cartons came in from another old Virginia store, and have gone into our deep freeze unopened; of course come a bit of thirty degree weather, these will be checked and again add atomosphere and color to Colonel Peirce's old store shelves. I was interested this morning in seeing on TV (Sunday, January 12th, 11a.m.) the work being done at Henry Ford's Greenfield Village. Their old store is a good bit larger than ours, but I found it very comforting to see shelves and counters just like those from Peter H. Peirce's — now on Jackson street. From the cracker barrel and checkers game beside the stove to the coffee grinder, desk, cheese cage, bonnets, dresses, candy jars, parasols and yard goods, I found that Greenfield and Middleborough are running a pretty close race! However, I'll lay a 278695 to one bet that there is a good modern heating plant in Greenfield! (Aside and behind the scenes: do you think we'll ever have a bathroom and a furnace?) Our warm thanks **again** to our friend in Old Virginny.

When the Franklin G. Harlow's moved — Ah, me, the trials of a curator. I often wonder how I got the job anyway — probably by opening my mouth too wide at a meeting — I think I recall saying I thought the Association ought to have one. Anyway, when the Harlows moved, they were kind and interested enough to remember the Historical Association and the museum. To try to remember the dozens of pieces would be impossible, and, to go down there now and handle them would be near suicide. The world is so full of a number of things, I wonder why the Good Lord didn't give me a better head. The old counter scales are in working order with the series of weights, and the decorative stencil designs still bright and colorful; this one makes three different sizes on the old Peirce counter — the large 1910 for heavy work, the Harlow's ca. 1876 for cheese and lesser foods, and another ca. 1860 for snuff, drugs and light work. Mr. Harlow's Father was a carpenter, and was at one time caretaker of the Peirce estate (of which our museum buildings were a part), and his pine, six-board tool chest (once in earlier days a sea chest from the wood blocks at each end to hold the rope woven becketts) with the old tools — AND — one of the longest bench or block planes on record — is now in the blacksmith's shop! Poor curating I'd say, but, at the time it arrived the stairs to the carpenter's shop just plumb looked like too much. From churns to maps, Civil War letters to medals, furniture to scales, and grindstones to early powder flasks or pouches, the Harlow collection has broadened our exhibits and enhanced the value of our museum.

Walter Zeronski brought us what I hope may be the cornerstone of our 19th century printer's and bookbinder's shop. We have been promised Joe Peck's hand press and the only fly in the ointment is the small matter of removing it from a third floor through a window and depositing it in the right room in the museum, IF we can plan and find this room with strong enough stringers supporting the floor! My mouth drools when I think of the wood type and woodcuts that are coming with it — if and when. Of course we'll need a printer — salary one dollar a year — so we can run off broadsides and circulars for visitors! Of course we might be able to make ends meet on his salary if visitors supported the press releases. How about that Thatcher?

There are a great many things that haven't happened that might have been real museum news! However, some people are never satisfied. On the other hand, if all of us were completely happy with everything, would anything ever get done? We are very grateful to those who have helped — and here's to 1964. Amen.

ACQUISITIONS

I can feel my readers nodding and snoozing already, and I'm not half way through — **not even half way through** the names and contributions we have managed to catalogue and make notes about! Shall I continue with the Woodward chair in the front parlor, the Everett Bowen collection, the steeple shelf clock given by the Everett Burnham's of Whitman, ticking away pleasantly in the 1890 kitchen, Helen Wood Ashley's delightful "topper" worn by the Ashley coachman when driving their grand old chaise behind that spanking pair of white "hosses" back along, and the Kenneth Leonard's homespun blanket and many other contributions "lo these several years?" Is there no end in sight? NO, Virginia, there is no end in sight. Thank Goodness there is no end in sight, and thanks, and thanks again to one and all. Keep it up. The first thing to do is remember **you do** have a historical museum, the second to save and rescue for us, the third for us to make room for your family memorabilia, and the fourth for us to classify it, catalogue it and exhibit it for coming generations to study and appreciate.

Editor

Instead of attempting a last minute gold rush, digging for questions, I'll merely try throwing out those other unanswered questions again. CAN'T ANYONE send us more data on: 1. Marcus Maxim's Nail Making Machine. 2. Mr. Shelly Inch of Placerville, California, and his friend Mr. Perkins of Middleborough — 1870-1880. 3. Gove & Bailey, Middleboro — toy and novelty manufacturers. 4. William F. Keyes and his "New Party Wagon" — "for picnics, balls and other entertainments?"

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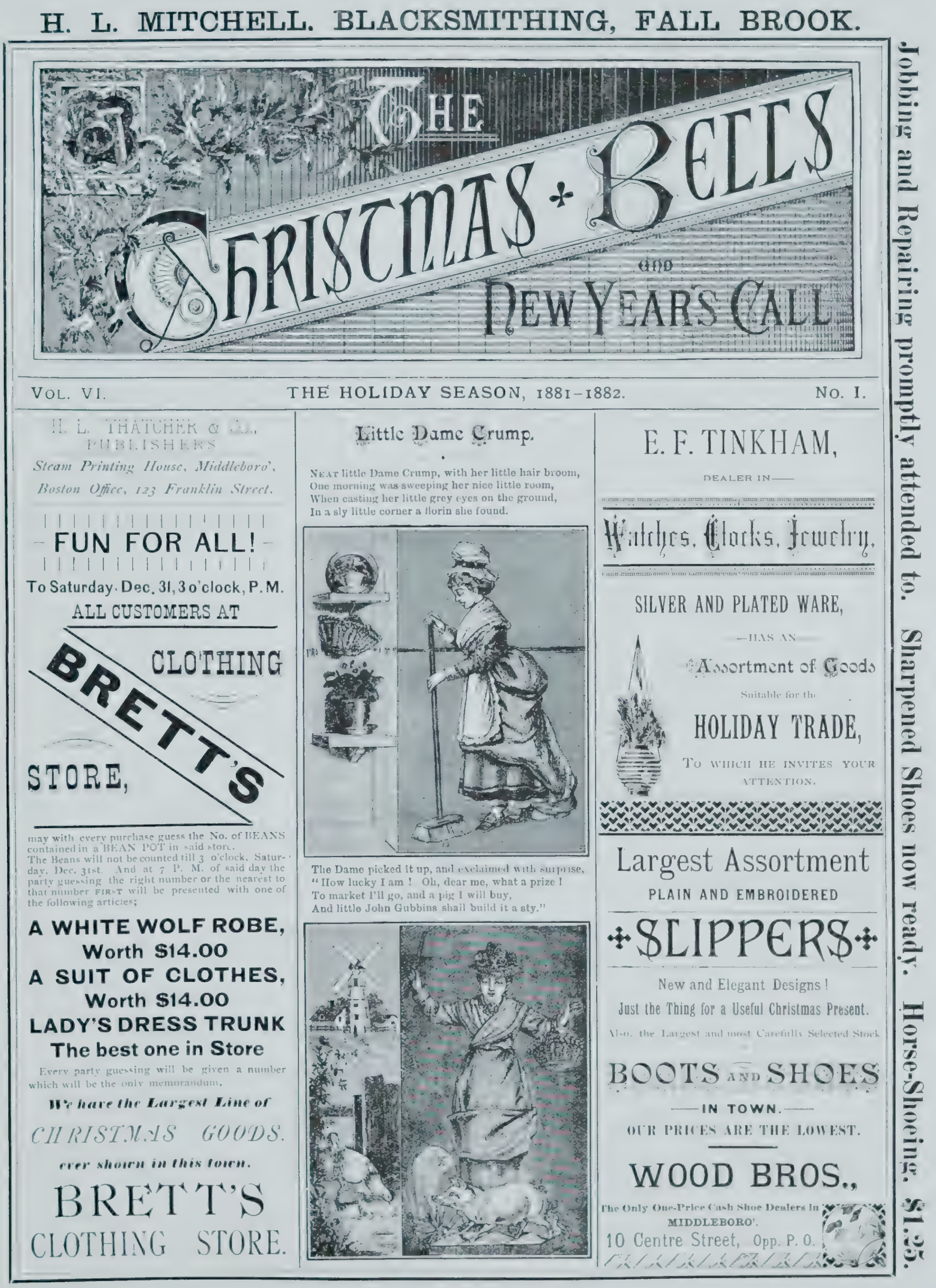

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The Christmas Bells and New Year's Call

Vol. VI. THE HOLIDAY SEASON, 1881–1882. No. I.

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See Page 8

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SOME ROLLING STONES GATHER MOSS

Lyman Butler

When I turned in my story of the old unfinished millstone (Vol. V, No. 2, April 1963), I thought that was the end of my articles, but since then I have been asked for more contributions, and have tried to put together recollections of different sections and neighborhoods. Perhaps it would be a good idea to throw a little light on my memory of so many locations.

My Father was a day laborer and worked wherever he could find jobs; naturally we moved around a good deal, and my recollections as a youngster cover most of the territory in Middleborough's eleven square miles.

I was born in 1905 in the old J. Bump place at Purchade, and am told that we moved to Norton when I was two where Father worked in the sawmill for a couple of years. Then we moved to Lakeville on Rhode Island road, where Tom Orrall now lives, while Dad drove an ice cart for Leavitt Caswell. From there we came to Warrentown and lived in the S. Hinckley homestead when Father farmed for George Morse. While this job lasted, I started school at Purchade.

We moved from here to the George Thompson place in Thompsonville. Dad worked for Dwight Kinsman at this time cutting wood and working the farm. We also lived in the old Fogg place on Danson Brook next door to the Kinsman dairy. When work ran out here we moved back to Warrentown and lived in the N. M. Tribou home, just a few houses north of the S. Hinckley place. Finally we ended up in the "old store" so-called, originally the Abiel Washburn store that operated when Muttock was a thriving community during the first quarter of the 19th century.

Perhaps these few lines will enable you to really believe that my recollections are factual, and that they are eye-witness notes rather than just heresay, folklore, or cribbed from printed history. (Editor's note: You bet they are, and I wish we had a dozen more like you who would put their shoulders to the wheel of preserving unwritten local history.)

THE TOONERVILLE TROLLEY TO TAUNTON

Lyman Butler

Many of us remember when the old Taunton Street Railway was a thriving line. At the time of its peak operation many people went from Middleborough to Taunton to do much of their shopping or to take in a show, and especially on weekends the cars were really crowded. (See also Vol. 1, No. 3. Birth and Burial of Middleborough Trolleys).

As more and more people bought automobiles, patronage dropped off, and finally instead of the large double truck cars, the smaller single trucks were used entirely. These were known as the Toonerville trolleys.

In the funny papers of the period, the Toonerville Trolley was a very amusing vehicle. It was always getting into all kinds of predicaments such as leaving the rails and sailing through haystacks and buildings, picking up pedestrians or cows on the way. Well, the old Taunton trolley had many similar experiences — and they really happened. One Fall day one of them left the tracks on tack factory hill in North Lakeville and ended up in the swamp. She stayed there all Winter, and it sure was a funny sight.

As time went on the old road got into pretty tough condition, and in the last years of operation those old single truck cars jumped around quite a bit, leaving the rails at frequently and least suspected intervals. I remember being aboard one night when we bounced off and all had to walk to town from Bedford street. Another time a car went off at C. P. Washburns mill. Fortunately it stopped only a foot or so from the rails. A fast thinking conductor borrowed a shovel from the mill, and by holding it under a wheel made contact with the rail and worked her back on the track — and away we went just as though nothing had happened at all. Everyone was sorry to see the old Toonerville go, but like Dobbin and many other conveniences of long ago, they have left us pleasant, happy and amusing memories other pampered generations can never know.

THE MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleborough, Mass.

VOLUME VI Number 2

Lawrence B. Romaine .... Editor
Richard S. Tripp, Mertie E. Witbeck } Associate Editors

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All gifts to the Historical Association and Museum are tax deductible under Federal Income Tax Law.

SUBSCRIPTIONS, ACQUISITIONS AND MUSEUM NEWS

First, due to costs of printing and mailing, we are forced to renege on our original plan to send free copies to historical associations, reference libraries and museums throughout the Country—and second, we now find we will have to renege on our subscription offer at one dollar in the future.

A study of our thousands of contemporary historical organizations, as well as those interested in conservation and other national preservations, indicate that in most cases the house organ or publication goes with the membership. This will eliminate a mass of mailings and stencils that now make for bookkeeping and records that take money and time. We feel that if you of that great and growing (and very much appreciated) group of readers really want the Antiquarian, you will agree that it is worth $2.00 or nothing. Will you join us even without the meetings and a vote in future plans? We hope so.

As to acquisitions at the museum, all I can say is that they continue to stream in the windows and the doors. Come Spring we promise our dedicated efforts to repair, restore and make space for exhibits now stored in our two lofts. The most outstanding piece, now snugly fitted in the south front parlor, is an 18th century highboy, the gift of Gertrude W. Dexter of Beverly, Mass. In the June issue we will catch up on the many gifts that have somehow or other managed to skid into our still unheated Igloo through the snow and ice of a long Winter. I hope this will do for this issue. For the first time in our six volumes, we actually have a small stock pile of material for June!

And now, going back to subscriptions and memberships, may I quote Lewis Carroll; as the whiting said to the snail — "Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?" We need your support to continue publication. How about it?

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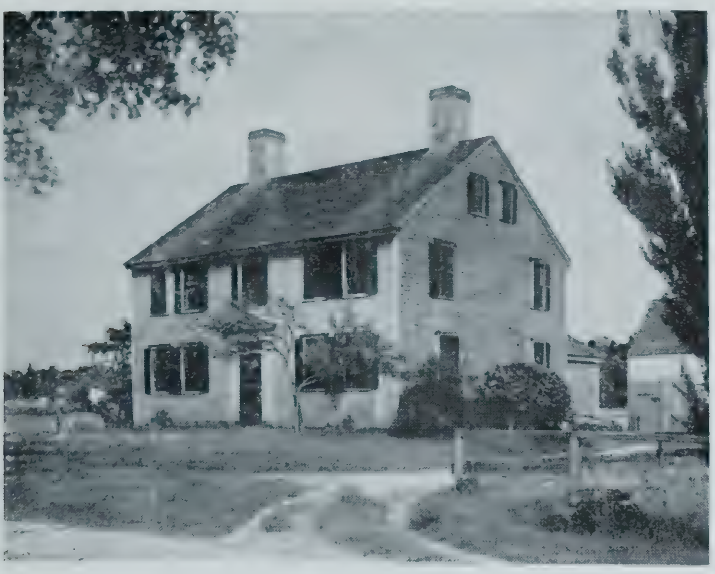

NOTABLE OLD MIDDLEBORO HOUSE

Eddyville dwelling over 150 years old occupied in the last century by Dr. Stephen Powers, grandfather of Hiram Powers, the distinguished artist.

(This article appeared in The Middleboro Gazette August 14, 1903, and was written by Joseph E. Beals who was active in town affairs of that time and who was an authority on local history. He died in 1909.)

Contributed by Austen L. Beals

Out in the eastern part of the township of Middleboro, near Eddyville, stands the large old two-story house shown in the picture at the head of this sketch. It is now occupied by George B. Lee. There is nothing peculiar in its outward appearance, being simply one of a type of houses built just before the Revolutionary War by persons who had families large enough to require such houses, or who were provided with sufficient means to build them. Its chief point of interest in connection with this sketch is that it was once the residence of Dr. Stephen Powers, who, at that time, was very prominent in the activities of the town and well known and somewhat famed for his professional skill. He was grandfather of Hiram Powers, the noted sculptor.

The house was probably built by Samuel Eddy, Jr., previous to 1746, as he died that year. It was next owned by Nathan Eddy, his son, who conveyed it on May 23, 1761, to Samuel Lanman, mentioning "land and buildings" and describing it as land that formerly belonged to his father, Samuel Eddy. His mother, Lydia, and his wife, Eunice, signed in relinquishment of their rights of dower. Lanman sold to Elias Trask, distiller, March 11, 1762, or, rather, they seem to have exchanged estates, as very soon thereafter Trask conveyed to Lanman an estate in Plymouth on what is now Leyden Street. Trask held it only about a month when he conveyed it on April 13, 1762, to Dr. Stephen Powers for 206 pounds, 12 shillings, 4 d., containing sixty acres, more or less. Dr. Powers, before removing to Woodstock, Vermont, in 1774, conveyed the property to Isaac Tinkham for 388 pounds, 2 shillings, 8 d., Nov. 2, 1773. After one or two other transfers it passed into the Clark name, and will be remembered by many now living as for many years the residence of Harrison Clark.

The ancestors of Dr. Powers came from Waterford, Ireland, about 1680. Their name was originally Power, without the "s," but later they seem to have added that letter. Dr. Powers was a native of Hardwick, Mass., and was born in 1735. He was a son of Benjamin Powers. His father was a farmer, but Stephen resolved upon a different pursuit and took up the study of medicine. After finishing his studies he located in Middleboro as a physician. Soon after beginning his practice he was married to Lydia Drew, daughter of John and Sarah Drew, formerly of Halifax. The record says they were married March 20, 1760, by Rev. Sylvanus Conant. His wife was also born in 1735. They joined the First Church in Middleboro July 4, 1762.

Their children, all born in Middleboro, were as follows: Susanna, born December 14, 1760; Mary, born March 2, 1766; Stephen, born August 6, 1767; John Drew, born November 17, 1769; Lydia, born March 15, 1772. Of these children Stephen, Jr., not John, as the history of the First Church gives it, was the father of Hiram Powers, who afterwards became celebrated as the sculptor.

Although he was active in his professional life, he also conducted a large farm, as the conveyances show that he purchased about 60 acres. About the year 1770 it began to be the town's talk that there was a new opening way "up country" where men of energy, pluck and enterprise could very soon build up for themselves fortunes in the wilderness of Vermont. The method of travel at that day was mainly by horseback. In 1772 he started out with his horse for a trip to this wonderful country so much talked about. He directed his course to Woodstock, Vermont, where some of his friends had gone before him. He seems to have found the situation very much to his liking, as he made purchases of land amounting to about 300 acres, remarking as he made one of his purchases, that he would take all the land there was on the mountain side worth having. He also arranged to have a log house built for him, to be ready when he should move to the new country.

He then returned to Middleboro and began his plans for removal. He sold his place at a good profit above its cost to him and closed up his Middleboro affairs.

His brother, Abraham, seems to have been here with him, perhaps having the care of the farm. The records show that Abraham Powers was married to Deborah Simmons, March 26, 1772, by Rev. Sylvanus Conant. He seems to have taken up land and settled in Woodstock before the doctor did. A brother of the doctor's wife had also preceded him in his settlement in the wilderness.

In 1774 the doctor, with his family and belongings started for their future home in the wilderness, to find, on their arrival, that the log house which he had provided for them was not ready and he was therefore obliged to put up a shanty for temporary accommodations.

His family consisted of his wife, five children, and a negro slave called Cato. The real name of this slave was Christopher Malbone, but he was usually called Cato Boston. The doctor purchased him for 20 pounds or about $100, just before leaving for Vermont. He was then about ten years old. He served in the doctor's family for many years, growing up with the children. He was full of all sorts of pranks and mischief, and for laziness and lying was unexcelled. When the war of 1814 broke out he enlisted, went into the service and was never heard from again.

The doctor is described as being about six feet in height, of vigorous build, dark complexion, with dark hair and eyes, well fitted physically for pioneer life. He was not given to dress or personal adornment. He was accustomed to wear a pair of buckskin trousers and is said to have made a handy use of them in sharpening his instruments for performing his surgical operations, so that in time they became considerably soiled.

He was a regular attendant at church while in Middleboro, and being a good singer, was very prominent in the choir, perhaps chorister, as he was the choir leader for many years after removing to Woodstock. He was also very jealous of his reputation as a musician, and it was said in later years by one of his grandchildren, that perhaps one reason for leaving Middleboro was that somebody had said that there were others in Middleboro who could sing as well as Doctor Powers. In his connection with the choir he was probably associated with Judge Oliver, who was his rival in musical skill. It may also be that politics had something to do with it. Judge Oliver, being the King's chief justice, was an adherent of the crown, while the doctor was a radical whig, standing up for his country all the time and every time and at all hazards. It is said that he was near by at the

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battle of Bunker Hill, and helped to dress the wounds of those who had been hurt in battle, having, with patriotic foresight, anticipated the clash of arms and happening there at the opportune moment.

The doctor was prominent in town affairs at Woodstock, having at times held different town offices; also in church matters, being very frequently chosen to serve upon different committees for special services; and his counsel was authority in medical matters in all the country roundabout.

It is interesting to note that the history of Woodstock and of the adjoining town of Hurtland and Hartford shows that there were hundreds of Middleboro people among the early settlers of those thriving communities, and that very many of them were the prominent men of affairs in the settlements.

Dr. Powers died November 27, 1809, aged 74 years. His widow died at the house of her son, John D. Powers, August 23, 1823, aged 88.

REMINISCENCES OF LIFE ON WALNUT PLAIN

by

Frank Everett Buckman

I was born in that part of Middleborough some thirty-nine (or more) years ago, and as a boy knew every square inch of it. (See Weston's History page 304).

This village is about one and one-half miles from South Middleboro out Spruce street, and consists of a triangle bounded by Spruce, Highland and South streets, and extended down South street to the Rochester line, past what was the Barrows homestead in those days, and later Andersons Piano Factory; down Spruce street the area continued to the Rochester line just past the Charles Harris Maxim home.

This triangle was covered with walnut trees except for two or three fields on the Highland street side. We had favorite trees that produced the largest nuts, and every Fall gathered in a Supply for Winter.

Our house was at the end of Highland street where it joins South street. This first house and barn burned down in 1896, and nine years later we had another home nearly finished when lightning struck the barn and burned everything to the ground —with no insurance. That, needless to say, ended our stay at this location. Father bought the Goodwin place on Highland street at the end of Benson street, and we went there to live as soon as it was fixed up and made liveable.

At Cartee's corner, where Highland street crosses Spruce street, there was a wooden mail box. Whoever went to South Middleborough would bring back the mail for the neighborhood and put it all in this box so that the rest of us could pick it up when we happened to go by. We went to the Highland School House where all nine grades were in one large room. Most times there were forty of us, so you can see what a snap those teachers had. We walked a mile to school. Home work consisted of chopping the wood, lugging it in the house, feeding the chickens, young cattle, horses, and cows, and in season, worked in the gardens — and STILL had time for fun. We had a boat in the pond back of the barn, a play house on the bank, and in the pine grove next to it we had an Indian village with teepees, fireplaces, lookouts in the trees with a war-hoop ready at any minute; never a dull moment.

Near the school house was the country store owned by Horace Ryder where one could buy hardware, clothes, shoes, bicycles, guns, farm tools — in fact anything you wanted. Eliza Gibbs kept house there for many a year, and had a showcase of candy; when we got a few pennies together we had some. Those were the days when we had our own ice house, filled from the pond and carefully covered and tucked in with saw-dust to keep it from melting, from which we kept the ice chest filled during the coming Summer.

For a few years we lighted the street lamps around South Middleborough and the Highgrounds. These were sort of glass cages with kerosene lamps, and there was one at each house. We had two lamps for each one, replacing the empty one daily, lighting it with the old sulphur matches, and closing the door quickly before the wind blew it out.

One summer evening back in 1904 or 1905 (Ed.'s note: and to think this man was only born 39 years ago), an automobile ran out of gas near our house. There were five men in it, and the last train to Boston had long since left Middleborough. They stayed with us that night, and the next morning I drove four of them to the depot in the horse and wagon to catch the seven-thirty train, and then took the driver over to C. N. Atwood's at the Rock to get gasoline. Later on we saw in the Boston paper that four aldermen with their driver had been stranded below Middleborough and forced to spend the night in a farmhouse: one of them was the late Mayor James Curley!

Those were the good old days when a man earned $1.50 a day for 9 or 10 hours work—no automobiles, no electric lights, no plumbing and little on which to spend money—plenty to eat, and Mother made most of the clothes, so we got along. Dr. Shurtleff pulled our teeth, sewed up our cuts, set our bones and welcomed many of us into the world; and as I look back now, it was a pretty good old world.

(Editor's note: This thirty-nine year old hard working member of our Association writes from St. Petersburg that he is absorbing the sunshine, swimming, boating, fishing and having a good time, and will write further about Highland street in the near future. Remarkable young gentleman, don't you think?)

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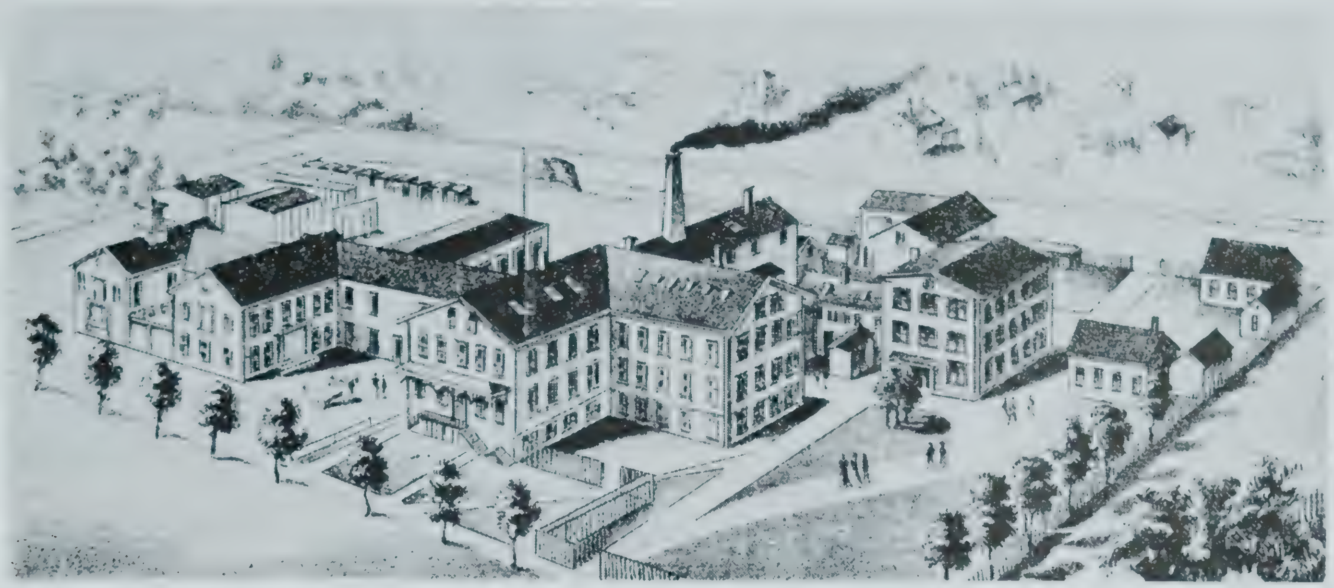

BAY STATE STRAW WORKS

The very first issue of the Antiquarian carried on the front page a picture of the Bay State Straw Works, but no information about its history and the extent of its productions. We thought it fitting and interesting to have in our publication an account of this once thriving business in Middleboro.

by

Mertie E. Witbeck

BAY STATE STRAW WORKS

(From an old scrap-book)

Two years before the century opened, Miss Betsey Metcalf of Providence, then a girl of 12, saw an imported bonnet, and taking the oat stubble from her father's field, braided the first straw bonnet ever made in the United States. As Mrs. Betsey Baker she is now known as the founder of the domestic straw-goods business. She taught her friends, who worked at home. Finally sewing halls were established and thus were laid the foundations of the great straw-working establishments of today.

Among these none is greater in extent, more admirably managed and more widely known than the Bay State Straw Works of A. B. Alden & Co., at Middleboro, Mass. Middleboro is one of those neat-looking New England towns where cleanliness and thrift are revealed to even the most casual observer. It has a population of 6,000 beings, several boot and shoe factories, but is chiefly noted as the locality of the Bay State Works.

The works of the firm cover seven acres of ground, the main building, which fronts on Courtland Street, being 36 x 36 feet. In this the packing, finishing, pressing and part of the blocking are done. The main buildings and connections cover 56,000 square feet of space, while 6,600 are occupied for the storage of goods and braid. The sulphur rooms for bleaching, which are outside and separate from the rest of the works, occupy 1500 feet.

The largest separate building is that used by the sewing-machinery, which is 96 x 71 feet, and has three working stories and a storage floor above. Some idea of the extent of the work done here may be gathered by the fact that one party alone furnished the firm last season nearly 4,000 lbs. of thread in large one-pound spools. In length the thread purchased during the past year would stretch 75,000 miles. On the first floor of the department is the machine-shop, reeling-room, and pattern-room. On the second floor and third floors are the sewing machines, of which 200 of Wilcox & Gibbs makes are used when the works are in full blast, at which time over 500 hands are employed.

To furnish power for these and other operations a 30 horse-power horizontal engine is used, three boilers — one of 80 horse-power and two of 40 — furnishing steam for the machinery, heating, drying and steaming. The boiler-room is back of the main building and detached from it.

The machine-shop is under the charge of a practical machinist, and all repairs are done on the premises. There is a carpenter shop, and a foundry for casting dies, all the plaster blocks are made on the premises, and the dye-house has every convenience for mixing and applying colors. At the expiration of last season there were on hand 66,000 lbs. of spelter in the shape of dies, three hundred barrels of plaster had been used in making blocks, only to be broken up and carted off to fill up a neighboring swamp. A number of out-buildings are used for storing braids, and there is a separate store-room for colored goods. There is also a band-box factory which turns out boxes to fit the various shaped hats which in turn fitted into wooden cases containing from four to ten dozen each. All the bill-heads, cards, tags, tips etc., are done on power presses in the printing-office of the firm.

And speaking of tags, a visitor notices at the outset that no names are known in the works. Each customer has a number and only the firm knows whom that number represents, so that each buyer's business is confidential between himself and the house.

Albert Alden, the founder of the business was born in Jay, Maine, on the 24th of October, 1817. He is a direct descendant of the John Alden who in good old Puritan times was sent by his valiant captain, Miles Standish, to court Priscilla, who changed the whole course of the proceedings by the question, "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?" Mr. Alden's mother was a daughter of Rev. John Adams, a Revolutionary soldier. Left an orphan at the age of seven, he lived with an uncle on a farm, but before he was of age had established a baggage and express service between Boston and Providence and Boston and Foxboro. In 1840 he started a straw business in a small way at the latter place, being among the earliest in the trade. For nine years he continued manufacturing, with various partners, when he joined the Carpenters and remained at the Union Straw Works until 1856. For a year and a half he was in charge of a braid factory at Nantucket and for a time was superintendent of the works of Thomas White & Co., of Philadelphia.

On November 20, 1858, Mr. Alden, having purchased the straw factory of Pickens Bros., moved to Middleboro, where he has since resided most of the time, and from the small building then occupied has built up one of the largest concerns in the

State. Adopting the title of the Bay State Straw Works, he admitted Mr. King as a partner in 1859, Hiram Plummer joining them a year later. In 1861 he sold out to Plummer & King, and moved again to Foxboro, but in 1862 repurchased the concern. In 1865 H. K. White was given an interest, which was purchased by Mr. Alden in 1871, and his son, Mr. Arthur B. Alden, admitted to the partnership. In 1872 David T. Hartshorne also became a partner.

In 1876 the Bay State Straw Works were sold to a corporation known as the Union & Bay State Manufacturing Co., Mr. Alden being one of the incorporators and a director. In 1882 he retired from active business and the works were leased to Mr. Arthur B. Alden, who formed a co-partnership with Mr. Hartshorne. In 1883 Mr. Alden, Sr., again purchased the Bay State Works . . .

end of quote from scrap book

The rest of the story of the Bay State Straw Works is brief. After Mr. Alden, Senior, died in the 1890's, his son Arthur B., took over the business. Because of the decline of the business, due to the decreasing demand for this type of straw, the company experienced serious financial difficulties. Mr. Alden's health gradually failed, and in December, 1895, he took his own life. His wife was Mary, daughter of Capt. J. M. Soule and their children were Betsy (Mrs. James H. Burkhead) and Albert, now of Palmer, Massachusetts.

After Mr. Arthur Alden's death, the business closed. In the early 1900's, the factory building was subdivided into dwellings, two of which now stand on the corners of Alden and Courtland Streets. Another large section of the building was used by the Alger Paper Box Company which was burned April 19, 1920. At the time the buildings were converted, Alden Street was cut through from Courtland Street to Court End Avenue.

THE MIDDLE BOROUGH

Lawrence B. Romaine, Curator

Backalong in the 17th century before Great Britain really knew quite what America was, a small community grew up about halfway between Plymouth and the Providence Plantations. It was the half-way house, or middle borough, between these two established villages even though it was not recognised or hallowed by act of incorporation until 1669. Governor Bradford refers to it in his diary in 1621[1]

"An Indean towne called Namassakett 14. miles to ye west of this place." Until 1669 we were a part of "Plimoth Plantation," and even then had to fight for the separate identity of **Middleberry.**

During the last three hundred years, Providence Plantations, New Netherlands and Boston have grown like ragweed and become three of the greatest cities in the world. Plymouth has remained a small town, but, with Plymouth Rock as a springboard, has become the nation's Blarney Stone and spread itself over the horizon of the American tourist like a Barnum & Bailey tent. **Everyone** knows the Plymouth story, but very few realise the 17th century importance of its little neighbor Middleborough. John Alden didn't place his foot on any important rocks in "Namassakett," but I believe that if he had lived longer he might have claimed our community as sacred to American history.

MIDDLEBOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY

Three hundred and one years after Governor Bradford first mentioned us, a group of citizens met to form an organization to preserve local history. Their enthusiasm attracted others, and thirty seven years later the association found itself faced with growing pains. The ever increasing collections of memorabilia had been housed in the public library in one room, and little by little was beginning to ooze into the attic, store room and upper gallery; even the steel files were overflowing. Something had to be done — the trouble was that the savings account and savings bonds were not keeping pace with Cephas Thompson portraits and General Tom Thumb's memorabilia.

Something or other amused Dame Fortune about this time, and she smiled at us. The town had acquired the property of the Peirce estate including several of the old mill houses on Jackson street, and, finding little revenue therein, decided to sell or bulldoze them into eternity for a park and parking lot. The association begged for two of them, with an acre bordered by the high school athletic field, the old Peirce Store (now the court house and police station) and facing the Girl Scout headquarters on Jackson street — a fine safe border for a museum!), and acquired title for one dollar.[2] At about the same time the Middleborough Antiquarian was born, and now covers national, state and local libraries, historical societies and museums from coast to coast. We were in business, and the call for volunteers went forth.

Our museum houses were two family mill homes built at about the time Colonel Peter H. Peirce opened his grand old store that served the town for over a century. A wing was added on the corner house shortly afterwards, and we believe three families once lived here though we can not prove it; but, in ca. 1830, why not? Though side by side right here in New England, one carpenter-builder planned his kitchens in the basement and the other on the ground floor. To date we have almost finished twenty of the thirty rooms for exhibits — and with contributions, auctions, cake sales, the Lion's Club minstrel show, Little Theater Group performances, school collections, rummage sales and the generosity of many other organizations, **still** have a balance in the bank for 1964 plans and projects.

The tremendous growth of interest in American history over the past years is beyond the average imagination, and the growth of historical libraries and museums unbelievable. Without a proper 1620 ROCK, a small community like ours, oozing with background and unrecognized prestige must blow its own little horn or be buried and smothered in the hugeness of 20th century progress. We have accepted the challenge, and here is our story. As Fred Allen used to say on radio every week — "Shall we go, Portland?"

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[1] "Of Plimoth Plantation. From the Original Manuscript." Published in Boston in 1898 as "Bradford's History." Available in most libraries.

[2] See Weston's History of the Town of Middleborough for further details of the Peirce family — Peirce Academy, Peirce Library and finally a half million bequest to the town.

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Middleborough Historical Museum
Two Years Ago

Let's start up the old granite steps under the sign in the first house (see illustration looking south down Jackson street). We enter a small hallway, wipe our feet on the old carpet and turn right into the first parlor. (Incidentally, the wall paper throughout were donated by the Strand Company, and the work done by our President who represents Strand in Middleborough. THAT'S what we call volunteer help!) You may at first be startled by the scene for as yet we have not been able to boast period rooms. From the 1750 hour glass, the ca. 1830 Cephas Thompson portraits, the General Grant era sofa, the Empire secretary and the Rogers Group, to the cupboard shelves loaded with Staffordshire, Sandwich glass, and the 1780 Chippendale chair in the corner, it is perhaps a bit hodge-podge. However, we hope you'll put up with these little Middleborough oddnesses, and by the time you walk out the south door of the corner house, rather like the lack of conformity to usual museum laws and rules.

There are five doors, and you'd best stick with your guide; let's go downstairs to the basement kitchen — and remember, that leaves three doors unopened as yet. Here in the old stone cellar with its brick floor we find the huge fireplace and bake oven, the flintlock for bear meat, a 1750 trap in case mother needs a fox collar, the 1790 coffee grinder, the old soapstone sink with its copper piped pump, the tavern table set for five and at least a **page** of other pieces accumulated over a century of cooking and living. But, like the White Rabbit in **Alice in Wonderland,** we have 18 rooms to go.

Passing along the dirt floored areaway between the two kitchens, we stumble over the old chopping block, skates on the wall, various tools, and suddenly come upon a full fledged blacksmithshop. (See illustration.) Two sets of bellows, two anvils, two forges and a miriad of things to be mended and things to be made — from a front door latch and hinges to harness and wheels. More stairs, and we come up into the parlor once used by the Jones — or was it the Smiths? We are in the second half. Here we find a ca. 1725 oval top tavern table with Sandwich glass lamps, an 1860 melodeon, another cupboard of childrens' toys and oddments, more portraits, a roundabout chair and of course grandfather's house shoes beside the warming pan on the hearth. Careful now, here you are faced with five more doors. In the small room at the top of the cellar stairs we find a large case with lighting fixtures from the pottery crusie and Betty lamp to small glass bedside whale oil lamps of later 19th century. The whatnot shelves exhibit more toys of the Gay Ninety era, and of course we are proud of **more** Cephas Thompson portraits.

Here there is only one other door; that's easy — and you can see before you move — THIS is the TOM THUMB COLLECTION. From the tiny coin presented to the General in England, the gown Lavinia wore at court, and a full length portrait of our little lady, we boast, both large and small, one of the finest collections in the country. There are three large cases plus seventeen smaller ones along the walls displaying everything from a bonnet or topper to furniture and the daintiest underwear ever made. Perhaps there are 600 items — I never counted — but if you count photographs, I'll be willing to place a bet. This was Mrs. Tom Thumb's home, and we are proud of her.

In what used to be the pantry off the Tom Thumb room that used to be two dining and living rooms, you will find a very complete collection from the old Bay State Straw Works. Bonnets, cards, moulds, ribbons and trimmings reminiscent of the Gay Nineties load the shelves. One of the original work benches for two workers sits on the opposite wall, its drawers filled with straw buttons and decorations, while the wall above bears photographs of the old factory. Few museums (I believe) have as complete a record of one of their own home town 19th century manufactories.

Now back through the Tom Thumb room, past Count Magri's bicycle, we come to the Judge Peter Oliver Room where we find a panorama with plans and details of one of the outstanding New England industrial developments of our 18th century. Judge Oliver's furnaces, foundries and forges manufactured everything from cannon and military supplies to pots and pans before the Revolution. Ted Eayrs, our local archeologist, has done a remarkable job both in excavation and interpretation — another example of local volunteer help. And so to place of beginning? Yes, but you are not through yet, for we must cross both parlors again to the Smith's stairway to bed, and climb to the carpenter's and cobbler's shops. (We have planned two bedrooms but to date the right beds just plain haven't come along; one will be a field or tester of the 18th century, and the other a short poster of about 1830-40 — give us another year.)

The carpenter's shop is of up and down 15" to 20" rough boarding with the rafters showing, and the corners properly pinned in oak. The ten foot bench is the one on which Mr. Soule once made coffins for Middleborough citizens. Adze, axe, drills, hammers, nails, planes and vises for every job are scattered or hung on all sides. We even have some original veneer sheets of mahogany in case you'd like to have your piano done over. The cobbler's shop boasts three benches, all manner of leather workers' vises, and I can safely say everything from a tiny wood peg to a stand-up bench.

CREEDON FLOWER SHOP
&
GREENHOUSES
113 Wareham Street
Middleborough, Massachusetts
Established 1878 Tel. 947-0421
Tel. Midd. 947-0485

THE BOSTON STORE
Center Street
MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS
Clothing for Children and Ladies
Established 1919 Tel. 947-3206

MIDDLEBORO CLOTHING COMPANY
38 Center Street
MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS
Clothing and Haberdashery for Men and Boys
Established 1894 Tel. 947-0206

GAUDETTE PACKAGE STORE, INC.
8 John Glass Jr. Square
MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS

Museum Today

But come, we have the second house to see. Crossing the driveway and lawn, we pass the granite monument Mrs. Tom Thumb built in memory of her Grandfather General Warren of Bunker Hill fame, the granite hitching post that stood in front of the old Peirce home, hitching posts that once lined North Main street, catch a glimpse of the outhouse that served the Sproat Tavern at the Green for many years, and come to the entrance to our restoration of the old Peirce Store. This occupies the north wing where we believe a third family dwelt when the Peirce farm, mills and store were all active. It may not be as large as the Greenfield Village store, but its all ours! The original counters, grain bins, clerks' desk and ledgers are local memorabilia. The shelves are crowded from clothing to pottery, foodstuffs to yard goods — a good term might be house furnishings — and yet the plow shares, agricultural implements and many other bits of merchandise must be noted too. The old soapstone stove warms the cracker barrel with the chess set for the local politicians and other loafers from the village.

Through a small hallway where notices and news of other historical institutions are posted we come to the library. (The Sproat Tavern outhouse is very conveniently located under two weeping willows for both the first house and the back door of the store). So far there is only one bookcase, but the upstairs rooms bulge with cartons of as yet uncatalogued books and pamphlets and manuscript material. A local tapestry, two more Cephas Thompson portraits, a scale model of a New Bedford whaler gracefully surround the center table covered with photograph albums.

Down the hall again we come to the G.A.R. Room where the same old stuffed eagle presides as he did over the original headquarters for many years. He is flanked by a portrait of General Grant on glass, standards, and prints, and surrounded by cannon balls from Fort Sumpter, guns, swords, boots and army equipment. The glass case on the table contains soldiers' letters, documents and other local memorabilia. The gun room is right next door with its wall of firearms from ca. 1750 through the Civil War period.

We enter the "**upstairs**" Gay Ninety kitchen next with its Sears Roebuck 1900 mirrored ice box and the "New Century" washing machine built the same year. The table covered with the red spread, and the fancy bird cage hanging over it, give us an idea of the atmosphere of this period compared with the basement kitchen in the first house. It is light and cheery, and there is no gun necessary to keep the ice box filled. The pantry shows the once familiar apple parers, herb mills, and other kitchen gadgetry. At the moment the pantry is crowded on two sides by the Ralph Nickerson collection of Indian artifacts, almost entirely of local origin. Behind sliding doors on many shelves you may examine bird points, arrow heads, axes, knives, drills, and many other manufactures of our local Indians. Hodgepodge? Well, yes, I guess so; in fact there is even one shelf swarming with Old Colony R.R. tickets and other memorabilia — or a part of our railroad collection still to be catalogued and housed.

The weaving room takes the next front room and exhibits both tools and products from ca. 1700 to 1900. The big loom loaned to us by Hells Blazes Tavern dates about 1720 and is flanked by a 1900 Singer Sewing Machine. The flax and spinning wheels, wool carders, reels etc. cover many years of home work from Colony to Nation. Of course we couldn't leave Cephas Thompson out entirely and his portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Levi Peirce hover over the Singer, wondering if they can be in the right room. The John Bennett Tory military coat, the new office (replacing we hope the present one with the 1890 Remington typewriter, 1890 maps, 1890 town treasurer's clock) and the costume exhibit come next — if we can finish them by next June. There's more? Yes — ten rooms full upstairs in both houses.

Middleborough, Mass.? Halfway between Plymouth and Providence, and about half way from Boston and New Bedford, and about halfway from Providence and Cape Cod. Right off new route 44 and practically on Cranberry Highway, old route 28. You can't miss us. How about a visit in 1964?

MIDDLEBOROUGH PRINTING IN THE ELEGANT EIGHTIES

(Editor's Dream)

With the acquisition of the second known copy of H. L. Thatcher's "The Christmas Bells and New Years Call," Vol. VI, No. 1, for The Holiday Season 1881-1882, (the only other copy is in H. L. Thatcher's safe to the best of my knowledge), and, a manuscript inventory of the Middleboro News as of April 1, 1886, thanks to the thoughtful generosity of Austen L. Beals whose Grandfather Joseph E. Beals wrote it, it seems fitting and proper to throw this picture on the screen of local history.

Our cut of the cover of this eight page New England advertising project is remarkably clear. Giving all due credit to our 20th century processes for such reproduction, we should marvel even more when we consider the inventory of a printer's shop of this period, and the equipment that produced it. I wish there was space to reproduce the whole thing but there isn't, and to boot it might prove too much of a good thing.

Although the printing establishment of H. L. Thatcher & Co. was **not** the office of the Middleboro News, I think it is safe to assume that the equipment was comparable. For those who might remember, I'll jot down a few of the advertisers for the record:

SPARROW BROS., Clothiers and Gents' Furnishers, 10 Water street — THOMAS W. PEIRCE, Holiday Gifts, School & Centre sts. — DOANE'S — M. TOOLE, Overcoats, Reefer Jackets, Corner Main and Water sts. — HARLOW'S MARKET, Christmas and New Years Dinners, Main & Water sts. — JOHN SHAW, Sign of the Gilt Mortar - Holiday Presents — W. O. PENNIMAN, Opp. The Hotel, Middleboro, The Place to Buy Christmas Goods — HAYDEN'S JEWELRY STORE — MISS BARROW'S ROOMS, American Building — GEO. T. PUTNAM, Photographer & Copyist, Studio Cor. Centre & School sts. — G. M. WILDE'S, Slippers, Buy a White Sewing Machine — MATTHEW H. CUSHING, Pure Groceries — BON-MODE MILLINERY, Centre street — EPH. BARDEN, Grapes, Figs and Peanuts — J. H. CUSHING'S FISH BAZAR, Cellar No. 3, American Block. R. H. STEARN'S & CO. of Boston also took a full page, and NOYES & BLAKESLEE of 127 Tremont street, Boston, made a bid for Middleboro's Christmas shopping in 1881 with a half page. The pictorial story of "LITTLE DAME CRUMP" runs through several pages, and the editors also presented their audience with "How Goldsworthy Brothers Spent Their Christmas," not to mention several delightful engravings such as "The Coming Storm," and "Gathering Holly for Christmas." A fine little production and well worthy of your attention. (Editor's Note: To my simple mind a pictorial record of any period in American history is worth a dozen parades and all the ephemeral hullabaloo that goes with them.)

And now for that 1886 newspaper and job printing office: "Inventory of stock in the office of the Middleboro News, April 1, 1886.

1	Potter newspaper press and fixtures	$750.00
1	Pearl job press	100.00
1	Stewart stove and pipe	18.00
1	Small coal stove	8.00
1	Air tight stove	3.00
1	Proof press	20.00
5	Imposing stones and stands	20.00
3	Double type stands	13.50
1	Type cabinet	5.00
1	Type stand and dead galley	3.00
1	Press Table	2.00
	Galley racks	4.00
	Office desks	12.00
1	Safe — (Herring's — cost $125.00)	75.00
1	Office table	5.00
7	Pictures and picture frames	5.00
	Chair	1.00
4	Stools — (high)	4.00
	Water pail and stone jar	1.85
	Benches and standing desk	7.50
	Type — all kinds etc.	625.00
	Chases (1 pair news)	13.00
	Chases — 2 pr. job	1.00
5	Lamps	1.25
	Kerosene can (patent)	1.25
	Oil and benzine cans	.50
	Lye brush and wrench	1.00
	Cutting wheel on press	13.00
	Rack for papers	2.00
	Gas fixtures in office	5.00
	Hammer, plyers and small tools	3.00
9	Brass galleys	15.00
	Lead and slug mould	5.00
	Mail bags	1.50
	Composing sticks	4.00
	Mailing machine	15.00
	Mailing type	25.00
	Punch	.75
5	Window curtains & fixtures	3.00
1	Large iron chase	3.00
½	Wheelbarrow and	
½	Truck owned with Thatcher.	

It is unfortunate that the item "Type — all kinds" doesn't give us a breakdown, and give us a check on the number of woodcuts and engravings on hand. It is probable that H. L. Thatcher had a more complete inventory, and perhaps loaned cuts to The News when needed. At any rate, I hope these few notes will open your eyes to how much was accomplished with so very little in this period of American printing. Today, we must have quantity with or without quality, but in those days quality came first and quantity was a secondary matter.

(Editor's dream? Oh, yes, — that someone will discover the complete Middleboro News inventory in a cellar or attic and bring it down to the museum on Jackson street.)

* * *

THE TEN ACRE LOT

by

Lyman Butler

Ruth Peck of Cabot, Vermont, the former Miss Ruth Shaw of Warrentown, recently paid us a visit. Her father, Charles Shaw, ran a milk route in town at the turn of the century. Talking over old times I happened to mention that I had a story on the Ten Acre Lot ready for the Antiquarian. She verified several things I recalled and added a few more. I hope this new version will be of interest to some of the descendants of the residents of Warrentown at that time.

On Plain street, a half mile or so from Summer street, setting well back in the woods, is a secluded field which was and still is called the Ten Acre Lot. At the time of which I write this field was owned by Charles Shaw and was used for various crops. The land was very rich, and whether potatoes or grain were planted, the result was always a bumper harvest. Who originally cleared this lot nobody seems to know, but it has had a long and fruitful life and is recorded in the Middleborough history.

This field was at one time pasture land for Col. Thomas Weston, whose home was the Old Weston Tavern on the corner of Plain and Summer streets, recently occupied by Tom Cleverly, and presently by Elmer Shaw. The building was built of materials from the old Edmund Weston house which was torn down in 1772.

In 1824 Plain street was laid out to substitute for a very crooked road that went through to Thompson street. The old road branched off Plymouth street at the top of Snow's Hill near the old Eber Beals place. Orrin Webster lived there when I was a youngster, and Marice Braga lives there now. This was the original road or lane to the Ten Acre Lot, and I believe you can still travel down through Beaver Brook Swamp. I remember walking up Beaver Dam Brook from Plain street marvelling at the construction work of the beavers. Often these dams would hold up so much water that the reservoir for Snow's cranberry bogs would get very low, and the dams had to be broken to let the water flow. This never worried the beavers too much — they were right back on their jobs in twenty four hours, and before you knew it the dams were rebuilt. (Editor's note: I wish we could find a few dozen beavers to get to work on the museum buildings on Jackson street.)

When you reach the old road, by going left a short distance you come to cross roads that lead to the lot. One goes through the woods and comes out at John Dean's on Precinct street, and the other leading straight ahead brings you to Thompson street at the old Wolski farm. The several cellar holes near the lot prove that there must have been a settlement here many years ago. Weston's History mentions some homes in the neighborhod, and along toward Thompson street you can still find the remains of the Levi Morton place. As kids we used to go to the lot from Morton Hill on Plain street near the so-called Ramsdell place.

Charles Shaw now lives in Acushnet after thirty years in Cabot, Vermont. He tells me that if you take the wood road to the left from the Ten Acre Lot on Plain street you will come out by Murdock Street bridge. There were apparently no houses on this road but it led straight to the mills at the bridge.

One evening last Summer we drove into the lot. Although we could not see any ruins, we did see one of the best stands of hay I have seen in a long time. How many of these cellar holes and ruins may still be found I don't know, but as soon as possible I'm going to travel the old trails again and find out.

M. L. HINCKLEY & SON

Jewelers

51 Center Street Telephone 947-1620

MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS

Est. 1915

KEITH & ALGER

INSURANCE

12 Center Street

MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS

CASWELL BROTHERS

Plymouth Street

NORTH MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS

FARRAR'S

Ice Cream

Catering — Wholesale — Retail

Everett Square

MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS

PEIRCE GROCERY STORE

Est. 1820

JACKSON AND NORTH MAIN

MIDDLEBOROUGH MASSACHUSETTS

Cassimeres — West India Goods — Pumps
Groceries — Farm Implements — Dry Goods

NO telephone — The Cars stop at the corner daily — If you don't see what you want, don't be bashful — ask for it.

H. L. THATCHER CO. — PRINTERS — MIDDLEBORO

MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.
Jackson Street
Middleboro, Massachusetts

Nonprofit Org.
BULK RATE
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Middleboro, Mass.
PERMIT NO. 97

The Middleborough Antiquarian

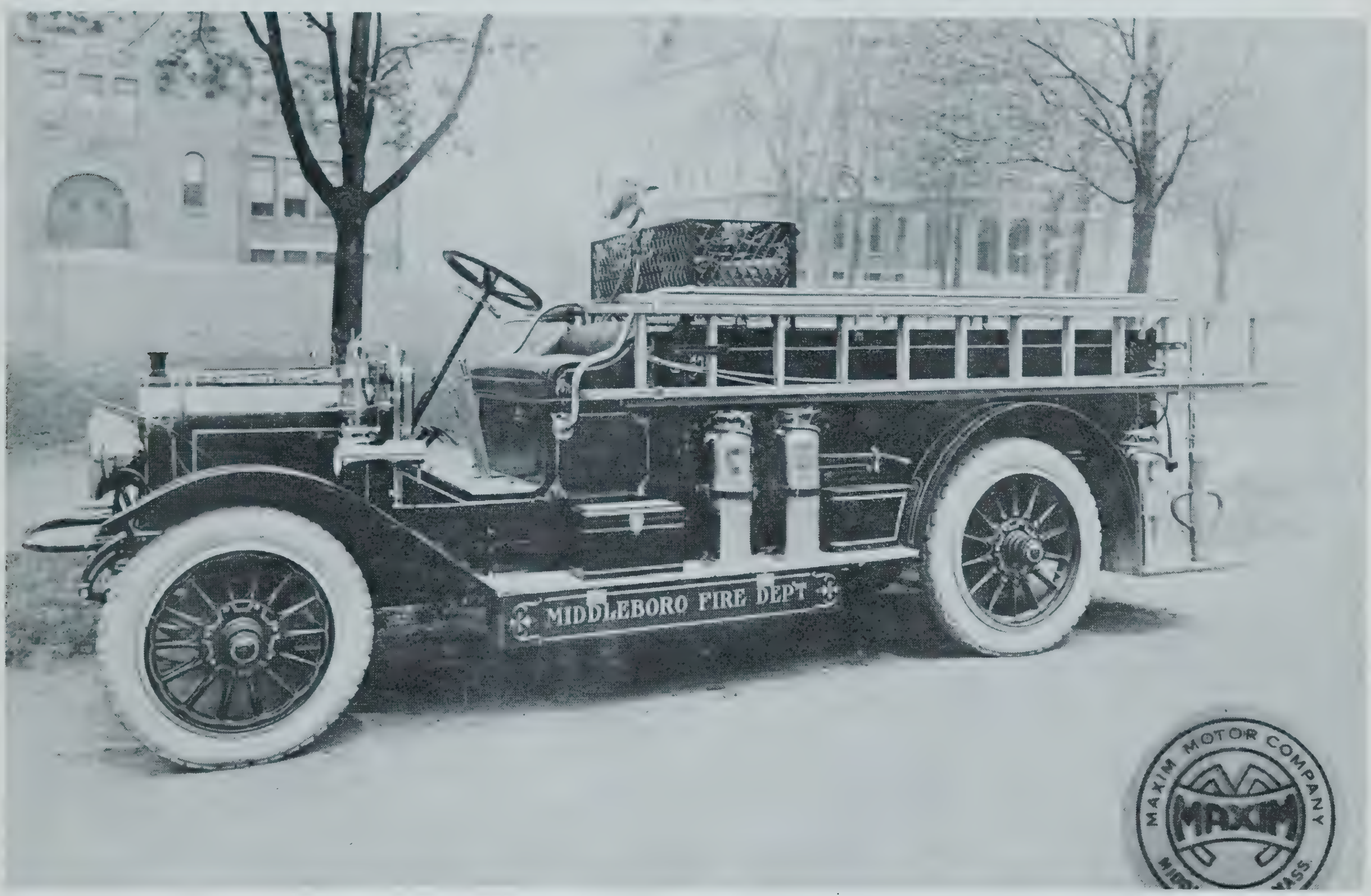
Devoted to the preservation of local history by

MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

Established 1922

25c

VOLUME VI JUNE 1964 NUMBER 3



MODEL F COMBINATION, DELIVERED MIDDLEBORO, MASS.
MAY 12, 1914

MAXIM'S FIRST FIFTY YEARS

Joseph C. Whitcomb

"Taking the contract to construct the motor driven hose wagon for the Middleboro Fire Department has brought to Middleboro Auto Exchange another branch of the automobile industry. Under the name of the Maxim Motor Co. they are now planning to build all kinds of motor driven fire apparatus and have already begun advertising for work of this kind." In this concise news item, the Middleboro Gazette of 1914 noted the birth of a new Middleboro industry which in the next half century was to bring to full fruition the announced plans of the founder, Carlton W. Maxim, and his son, Ernest L. Maxim.

"C. W." loved machinery and had a way with mechanical things. He instinctively knew the "fix" for a balky engine or a grinding noisy gear box. His mill on Cambridge Street had grown, and had a considerable reputation for inside wood finish of high quality throughout this whole area. The mill income let "C.W." indulge in the ownership of a brand new 1901 steamer which was to be replaced by an Autocar two cylinder marvel. Meanwhile, other local motorcar enthusiasts acquired various makes, all of which had the mysterious ills common to such contraptions. "C.W's." way with such problems kept the barn and yard full of friends in need. An addition to the barn was made, but failed to offer space for this growing second business.

At this time, the recently defunct Middleboro, Wareham, and Buzzards Bay Street Railway car barn on Wareham Street was available and 1907 saw the business moved to this location under the name of the Middleboro Auto Exchange.

The energetic team of "C.W." and E.L.", both working night and day, soon established this garage as an institution of more than local fame for automobilists with problems, and at the same time offered for sale the autos which kept the service department busy—demanded replacement parts, gasoline, oil and grease for every day operation.

In addition to his mill and garage interests, "C.W." was an active fireman, in fact, was one of the engineers. The department had purchased, in 1912, a motor hose car to supplement the hand drawn equipment. Two years later, the department was ready for a second motor hose car. Apparently, two years had revealed some faults in hose car #1 which "C.W." felt could be improved in a Maxim built apparatus. The fire engineers concurred, and contracted for the first Maxim Model N hose car—a very modern four cylinder chain drive apparatus with pneumatic tires at a price of $2,500.00. About 60 days later, May 12, 1914 to be exact, the truck was delivered and accepted by the Town of Middleborough.

WINTHROP-ATKINS CO., INC.

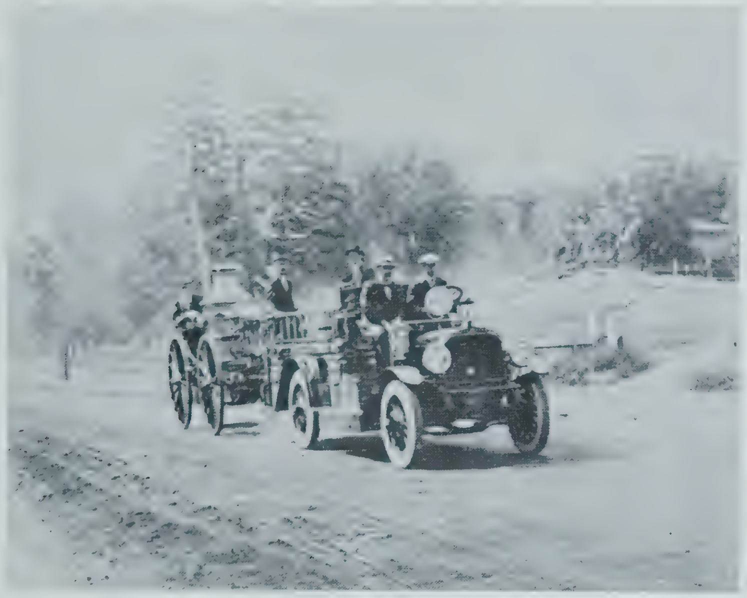
151 Peirce Street
MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS

Nu-Leth-R Calendars
Housh Photo Mountings
Winthrop Toys

C. P. WASHBURN COMPANY

Established 1634
Cambridge Street
MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS
Telephone 947-2666

Lumber – Building Materials – Masons' Supplies
Grain – Feed



THE WESTERLY TEST — ERNEST MAXIM AT THE WHEEL

The Maxim fire truck was launched into the highly competitive automotive world.

Several of the original models were built and sold in the New England area. As always, new products had to prove their performance and the town of Westerly, Rhode Island, wanted to replace hay, as a fuel, with gasoline. In fact their South County foresight demanded double duty ability from their projected purchase—one, a motor truck to carry hose—two, power to haul their existing steamer up one of their steepest grades. The Westerly photograph is visual proof that the apparatus "made the grade" with Ernest Maxim at the wheel. There is a shop rumor, which at this late date cannot be confirmed, that a verbal agreement required the 40 gallon chemical tank to be full of a famous Providence made beer upon delivery, and that the verbal commitment was honored.

As the business progressed, it immediately became evident that the truck line must be expanded to include pumpers and ladder trucks. These were special vehicle types and the Maxims turned to an axle supplier, for engineering assistance, who agreed to send one of their best engineers to help the Maxims work out the required designs. Six or eight weeks of the engineer's time would certainly be sufficient to complete the required layouts for these new vehicles. Thus it was that on a cold Sunday morning in April of 1915, the engineer arrived, a young man about thirty years old with a wealth of experience already gained from his association with Baldwins, of locomotive fame, the building of racing cars under the famous Louis Chevrolet, design experience in the well known Matheson Motor Car factory and at times as engineer in the Sheldon axle plant. Sheldon's loss was Maxim's gain and C. A. (Bert) Carey has been chief engineer of Maxim for over 49 years.

With the addition of the ladder truck line and the new pumper line, powered with the latest most modern engines as well as incorporating new features not found in other fire apparatus, such as gear driven axles in place of chain drive, improved springing for easier riding, pneumatic tires as standard equipment, better steering equipment and other features to delight the heart of a fireman, the name of Maxim was a definite factor in the New England fire apparatus business.

Until 1918, C. W. Maxim had conducted the business as an individual. This year the business was incorporated under the present corporate name—Maxim Motor Company. The corporation issued common stock held by the Maxim family, and a preferred stock issue to provide additional capital was taken up by local business men. The officers were: Carlton W. Maxim, president; Ernest L. Maxim, treasurer; Florence W. Swett, clerk; with the Board of Directors consisting of C. W. Maxim, E. L. Maxim and Florence W. Swett. Shortly thereafter Fletcher L. Barrows took Miss Swett's place on the Board and served until 1938 when Theodore N. Wood was elected to the Board, and he served until 1956. Joe Whitcomb joined the Board in 1935 and Leighton Maxim in 1951.

THE MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleborough, Mass.

VOLUME VI Number 3

Lawrence B. Romaine .... Editor
Mertie E. Witbeck .... Associate Editor

Museum open June through October and by appointment.

Adults .... .50
Children, 12 and under .... .10
Members .... free

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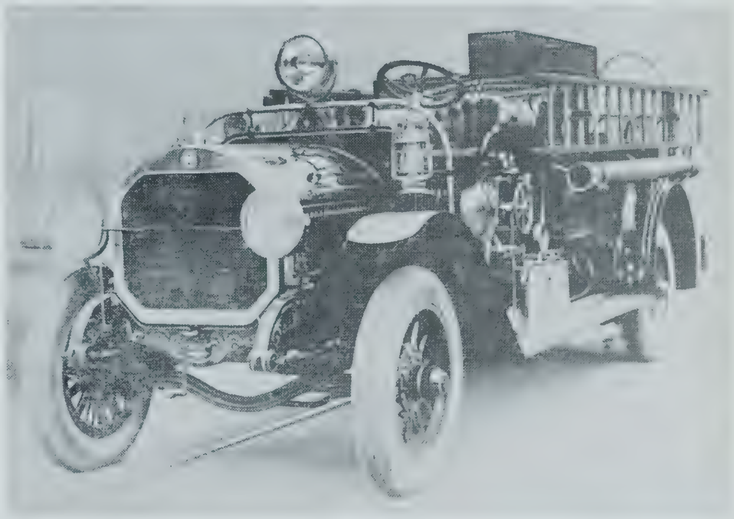
Individual copies .... .25
Historical Association membership (including Antiquarian) (annual dues) 2.00

Miss Ruth Gates .... Corresponding Secretary
71 Thompson Street, R.F.D. #2, Middleboro

Subscriptions may be mailed to Robert F. Howes, Treasurer, 84 School Street, Middleboro, Mass.

All gifts to the Historical Association and Museum are tax deductible under Federal Income Tax Law.



MODEL DURING 1918-1919

During 1916 the company ventured into the manufacture of commercial trucks in addition to its fire truck line. The trucks were sold in the immediate vicinity of the factory. They were highly regarded for their quality and performance. However, the Maxims were essentially fire truck builders and they decided to concentrate their efforts on fire apparatus.

Over the years, the carbarn had been rebuilt and a second floor constructed to provide paint shop space, the mill on Cambridge Street had been discontinued and a mill section installed in the rear of the second floor. Here, the manufacture of wooden fire ladders by Charles N. Warren and Dudley Perkins, with their craftsmanship in wood, established the Maxim wooden fire ladder as the best in the Fire Service. A concrete

HALSIL PRODUCTS CO., INC.

19 Jackson Street
MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS
Founded 1928 Tel. 947-0870

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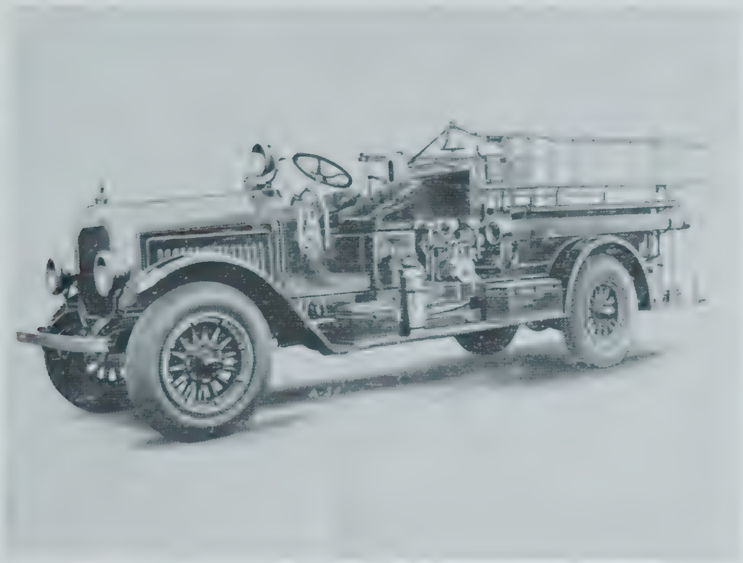


GENERAL STYLE DURING 1920's AND THROUGH 1931

assembly building was added, at the rear of the main building, extending through to Jackson Street.

Maxim apparatus has always enjoyed a reputation for mechanical excellence and in addition has always had a distinctive design which immediately distinguished a Maxim from other competitive makes. The early twenties started a famous series of models with a distinctive angular treatment which firmly established the Maxim in the minds of the Fire Services.

The distribution of Maxim had moved out of New England into New York and New Jersey with occasional shipments to Japan after quoting by cable in response to the never changing inquiry "Quote on 750 gallon pumper—same as last latest model." One of each new model went across the Pacific—one and one only.

The stock market crash of 1929 came just after Ernest Maxim and Bert Carey had returned from a trip to England, and the continent—their purpose being to study European aerial ladder construction because the next important addition to the Maxim line was to be an aerial ladder. The stock market crash put an end to that program, but the determination to build this equipment remained alive, deferred until a more propitious time.

In 1930, Leighton L. Maxim, Ernest's son, joined the company as did Joseph C. Whitcomb, "C.W's." grandson and "E.L's." nephew. The effects of the stock market crash had not reflected in the fire truck market. 1931 indicated the need for an improved line of apparatus. Realizing the serious financial situation of the municipalities and the hazardous effect on the Company's financial strength, Ernest Maxim decided to take the risk of developing a whole new line of apparatus, and again Maxim led the field with new higher speed, higher horsepower vehicles which, ultimately, brought a change of concept to the whole fire apparatus industry.

1932 through 1939 were bleak years. In 1935 "C.W." retired as president of the Corporation. Ernest Maxim succeeded his father, and Joe Whitcomb succeeded Ernest Maxim as treasurer. C.W. Maxim passed away in August 1935. The sales of fire trucks continued to be small and very competitive during the late thirties and 1939 saw the company venturing back into a line of specialized commercial trucks which were successfully sold in the New England region.

The start of World War II in Europe, and the build-up of the U. S. armed forces gave new impetus to the gasping fire truck industry. Municipalities were buying again—civil defense was being started—overseas operations by the U. S. Government required fire trucks and special vehicles—all this reflected in a suddenly accelerated activity at the Wareham Street plant.

The entrance of the United States into the War, in 1941, demanded additional output. The plant facilities were expanded, new buildings added, and the employment was to reach its peak. Several hundred army fire trucks of various types, special pumpers for shipyards and defense facilities, marine pumping units, hundreds of trailer pumpers, nearly two thousand salt water distillation skid unit enclosures and many other sub-contract orders comprised Maxim's contribution to the war effort.

With the cessation of hostilities in 1945, several million dollars worth of war contracts were cancelled leaving only an order for 80 new type airfield crash trucks. An allout effort to resume civilian production was required. A new line of apparatus had been worked out during 1944 and 1945 to be built when peacetime operations were resumed, and production on the new line was started with the first units delivered in January of 1946.

Maxim was now one of the major national producers of fire apparatus.

The Maxim aerial ladder designed and built in Middleboro from 1946 on is considered the finest aerial ladder produced in the United States—once more the design was revolutionary—once more the industry had to change and improve its products because of Maxim leadership in design and craftsmanship.

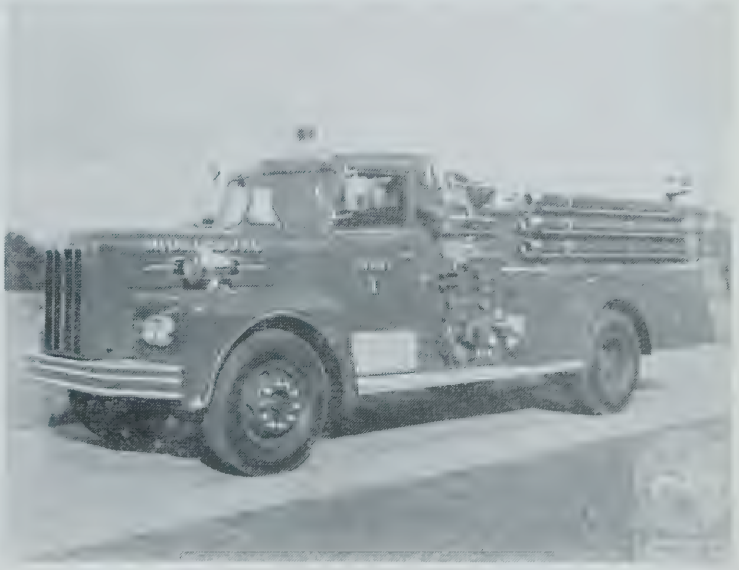
The business continued to grow and the sales areas to expand. The export market contributed to Maxim's output. Maxim crash trucks for airfields protected most of the major airports on the East coast as well as Southern and West coast fields. The aerial production was expanded to allow production of Maxim ladders for use by other fire truck manufacturers.

In 1942, the property of the Nemasket Automobile Company on Wareham Street was acquired from John Howes when he retired from the garage business. Changes in the building were made and this property serves as the service department of Maxim. It was originally organized by Charles L. Norton for the company, and upon his retirement, Merrill A. Shaw succeeded to this post.

In 1956 the company passed from the control of the Maxim family to the Seagrave Corporation, a large builder of fire apparatus. Ernest Maxim became chairman of the Board of Maxim, Joe Whitcomb, president, and Leighton Maxim, vice president. The management of the Company continued as before under the new ownership.

Ernest L. Maxim who passed away in 1957 was considered one of the outstanding fire apparatus executives of the country. He had served several terms as the president of the Fire Apparatus Manufacturers Association, a national organization, and had served on many important committees of the industry.

Leighton Maxim's death followed that of his father, in 1961.



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The present management consists of Joe Whitcomb, president, Benjamin W. Lewis, vice president, and Harold H. Hubbard, clerk and treasurer. The ideals of the founders continue to be the tenets of the management. The personnel in the shops and offices continue to have the pride of craftsmanship which assures the continuance of this highly specialized segment of the automotive industry.

THE HISTORY OF A COLLECTION

Grace E. Clark

(Eve Lynn '86)

(In memory of my dear little daughter — Gladys,
Little Peter, or Tabitha Ann — by Her Mother.)

(Most memorabilia, whether single pieces or collections, come to historical museums with no history or provenience. We are fortunate—most fortunate—not only in having the privilege of preserving this collection of miniature "little people" or toys, but also in having the life history of the little girl whose life they represent. Ed's. note.)

Little Peter, Tabitha-Ann and Gladys Clark are all the same little girl who was born in Middleborough, December 19th, 1901. This collection was her life, call them toys if you will. Keeping house for her **Funny Family** was as real to her as your own family and friends.

She lived in a leather and aluminum jacket from the time she was a year and a half old until she was fourteen, a victim of spinal meningitis. Specialists had consultation after consultation to no avail; even the "Big Doctor" could find no cure. We carried her in our arms or in a baby go-cart, and when she reached ten she was still only three feet tall. Being so small, little things pleased her more than the usual size dolls and toys—and here the story of the collection starts.

One day a lady who ran a sweater business, having heard about Little Peter, called to say she had lots of odds and ends she thought we might use. Her Grandfather always called her Little Peter until I read her the story about Aunt Tabitha Ann—this tickled her so much that from then on we called her Tabitha Ann. I picked out a ball of honey-dew color yarn and began to wind it while she watched, and almost without thinking I made a little doll—we called her Kitty, and the Funny Family was born. Little Boy Tommy came before Father Bob and Mama Sally, and baby Jocie followed. Then of course Kitty had to have a doll, so we named her Maggie, and then came Spreckles the cat, and Sport the dog.

Next of course this Little Family had to have a house, so her father built a table that went across the bed, and a cardboard doll-house. Eventually, before Little Peter passed away, this Little Family—this Little Funny-Family lived in a great big two story house. I wrote the story of Little Gladys and her Funny Family for the Providence Journal Evening Bulletin, and it ran under the heading "Twilight Yarns" for over five years. The family grew, and the youngsters left home as all youngsters do—some went to California, Tommie went to camp with Papa Bob who was then with the 43rd Signal Corps. Eighteen of them went to Roxie to be sent to the Children's Hospital in New York City. One of the family went with the A.B.C. man on his "Always Be Careful" trip south. Roxie later reported that each theater wanted to keep its own doll. A set of dolls went to John Martin. Mrs. Anderson, 'Story Teller' of X.Y.Z. Radio came to us to ask help in her work. The yarn family grew and grew, all from the life and love of one little girl named Gladys Clark—Little Peter—and Tabitha Ann. They traveled to the little sufferers in the Rhode Island Hospital—and one little girl wrote a letter thanking us for the doll—her name was Mary Smith—and thereby hangs another tale.

Gladys was thrilled. She thought and dreamed about Mary Smith as a golden haired, blue eyed little girl, and she wanted her to come and visit us. As it turned out, Mary was a little colored girl with a hip disease, but Gladys thought it over and exclaimed: "It makes no difference—I love her just the same." (Ed's. note—I wish there were a billion little girls in the world who were such real Christians—who might help to wipe out the narrow, selfish race prejudices that today threaten world peace.)

The only time Gladys ever cried was when one of her friends married, and asked her to be one of her bridesmaids. We worked it out and went to the wedding, and Gladys was one of the flower girls as she was just the right size! And what a time we had making the dress and fitting shoes. Of course everything she wore had to be made to fit, and no ready made apparel could possibly suit. I could write and write about my little girl, but I must stop. It has been hard after all these years to unpack and handle again this little Funny Family and all its belongings. I am sorry now I destroyed the doll house, but I just didn't want anyone else to have it. I am very glad I spoke to the Museum Mouse about all these tiny furnishings, and to know that they will be preserved in the museum on Jackson Street. Little Peter loved tiny china dogs—and I know there was a tiny Noah's Ark—and, Oh, lots of other things—and one of these days I'll find them and give them to the museum.

(Ed's note: This collection of tiny memorabilia is hard to picture. The tiny rag dolls Mrs. Clark made for Little Peter—Tabitha Ann or Gladys are perhaps not historical rarities, but the house furnishings of this Funny Little Family, through gifts from many, many friends cover a period of many years. The ice boxes and stoves for instance—none of them over 2½ inches—date from ca. 1876 to 1935. The tiny copper kettle was made from a penny. The dishes and sets of chinaware were sold by Sears Roebuck during the Gay Nineties. There are hundreds of pieces, and I doubt if any museum in the country can match the collection. Our very sincere thanks to a devoted mother, author and historian.)

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EXCHANGES

We are glad to welcome THE SEA BREEZE, Vol. 1, #1, April 1964 just received from the St. Petersburg Historical Society. Congratulations and good luck.

We also want to thank members of the Bay State League for the regular exchanges with our Antiquarian through our first six years of publication—as well as our many state and local associates in the preservation of American history from Maine to California. If you have never seen a copy of Bill Petersen's THE PALIMPSEST (The State Historical Society of Iowa), you ought to pick one up—it's a great job. This issue is pretty tight right now, and there is no room to list all of you, but at the risk of being criticized for playing favorites, I'd also like to recommend PILGRIM SOCIETY NOTES, Plymouth, Mass. No. 14, May 1964.

The original aim of the Middleborough Antiquarian, as has been the object of every historical publication for centuries, was to discover and put in print for future generations of Americans unknown facets of local history. Our original policy was to distribute as many copies as possible where they would be preserved and used. To this end we delivered them free at our town hall, in all our school buildings, with friendly and cooperate merchants, in antique shops and restaurants, at the library, police station, fire station and anywhere folks were willing to give them space. We followed this policy for four years, and included on our mailing list all member societies of the Bay State League, and scattered historical organizations throughout the Country. The Association dues were pretty well eaten up during this period, and we decided to try to make the Antiquarian pay expenses.

With volume five we offered annual subscriptions at one dollar, and thanks to the generous cooperation of our merchants and manufacturers in the community, took on eight pages of paid advertising. Subscriptions have been slow in coming, but we do feel we have done the groundwork, and last year managed to "come close" to the goal.

We are considering giving up newsstand sales and place this six year old historical publication on a "membership-subscription" basis; in other words we will mail each issue to all members and to all subscribers at the present rates. **Unless** we hear from any of our current outlets (and we do realize that their kindly offices in displaying and selling the Antiquarians for us has been an extra chore and a nuisance which we have very much appreciated) to the effect that they REALLY WANT to help further, copies will be for sale only at the museum on Jackson Street starting with Volume Seven for 1965. We will keep our present mailing list intact through 1964, but we do hope members of our Bay State League, and other organizations from Maine to Texas, will consider ONE DOLLAR well spent for a subscription to Volume Seven for 1965! May we hear from **you?**

Although we have lost one associate editor, we are training another to take his place. Martha Howard is now proof-reading for us, and in another year we hope she will be writing and working with us full time! She has been one of our most enthusiastic workers at the museum for several years and I feel sure will be a real addition to the small Antiquarian staff.

As we go to press we have just learned with deep sorrow of the death of one of our oldest and most loyal members and supporters, Ernest S. Pratt. Readers of the Antiquarian, as well as the entire Historical Association, will long remember his many contributions to the preservation of our history. He will be sorely missed by all of us in the town of Middleborough.

MIDDLEBOROUGH FIRE DEPARTMENT — 1852

We have in our files "An Act To Organize Fire Departments. Bounds of the Middleborough Fire Department—By-Laws—List of Officers. Printed Cambridge: 1852." It seems entirely fitting and proper that a few lines from 1852 should go with "Maxim's First Fifty Years."

The various sections decree that any community numbering over 1000 inhabitants may organize a fire department. Apparently seven freeholders could petition the selectmen for a fire department—"If the selectmen refuse or neglect to summon such meeting, any justice of the peace in the county may call the same." I wonder if that would work today? The rest of the sections dictate rights and privileges protecting the firemen as well as the inhabitants. This act was approved by the Governor, March 16, 1844.

The Limits and Bounds of the District are (roughly) as follows:

"Commencing at that point on the Boston and New Bedford road near the house of Thomas Doggett . . . . . , where the road leading to the Alms House leaves said road,—thence to the road leading from the Four Corners to Wareham, near where a school house formerly stood—thence north—to the bridge at the foot of long hill near the house of Thomas A. Pratt—thence north to the corner of Lorenzo Wood's Farm, near Elisha Waterman's, thence north—crossing the road in front of Nahum M. Tribou's house—to the bridge near Thomas Weston's, thence south—to an apple tree on the westerly side of Alfred Randall's house, thence south—to bounds first mentioned."

In these dear old days there was no question of salaries, and every gentleman fireman took his pay in terms of honor in protecting the homes of his fellow citizens. He pulled the apparatus and risked his neck for the good of his community—and that was that. The familiar phrase "what's in it for me" hadn't been coined, and no **real** fireman wanted any cash settlement for what he considered his duty to his town.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MAY FLOWER LODGE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

Ernest Judge

According to G. Ward Stetson's **History of May Flower Lodge,** although 1964 represents a hundred years of loyal service in the Town of Middleborough, there were Masons in the community in 1740. Lieut. Governor Andrew Oliver and his Brother Judge Peter Oliver were members of St. John's Lodge. Col. Ebenezer Sproat was a member of American Union No. One. By 1823 the Social Harmony Lodge was well established.

The Middleborough Historical Association and the Historical Museum have much in common with the May Flower Lodge. Both organizations have preserved local history, and made local history. Cephas Thompson, a Middleborough lad who became a nationally famous artist and painted portraits of our First Chief Justice, John Marshall, President Thomas Jefferson, and many other national figures in his day, was a Mason. The museum boasts over a dozen fine examples of his work, including a portrait of his Mother. General Tom Thumb was a Mason, and again we boast as fine a collection of memorabilia that once graced the Tom Thumb's home as any museum in the country—although we must confess that the Masons in their turn have preserved his Masonic regalia with loyal care. We on the other hand have loyally preserved historic treasures from the Olivers, Sproats and Thompsons and many, many other loyal Masons.

General Tom Thumb (Charles Sherwood Stratton) was initiated into the mysteries of Masonry, October 8th, 1862 in St. John's Lodge, No. 3 at Bridgeport, Conn. He was knighted there in Hamilton Commandery where his uniform and sword are still on display. The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts has preserved his Royal Arch Chapter apron and certificate indicating his membership in the Supreme Body of the Masonic Rite of Memphis, introduced from France about 1860. He was created a 32 degree Mason in La Fayette Consistory at Bridgeport, and his wife Lavinia was initiated in Golden Gate Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star in San Francisco.

The General was a frequent visitor at the Lodge while living in Middleborough, and his wife attended the Hannah Shaw Chapter of Eastern Star. He died at his home here in 1885. The casket was covered with broadcloth embellished with Masonic Symbols, and May Flower Lodge escorted his body to the train that bore his remains to Bridgeport where it was to lie in state at St. John's Episcopal Church, guarded by Knight Templars. Lavinia died at the age of 78 and was buried beside her "beloved Charlie" many years later.

Again our congratulations on your Hundreth Anniversary, and your many years of loyal service to the community. I hope our organizations may survive many more years of both making and preserving Middleborough history.

* * *

FILLING STATIONS OF YESTERDAY

Lyman Butler

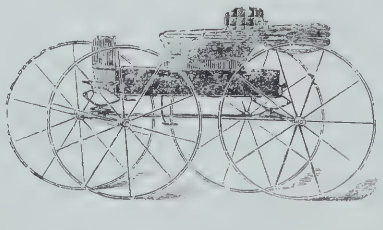
Driving along today's super-super highways and speedways, fancy, gaudy service stations are thicker than jack rabbits used to be on the prairies. They stand ready with uniformed lackeys who wash windshields, check oil, pour in the gas and sometimes explode with quaint little company lines like "Happy Motoring."

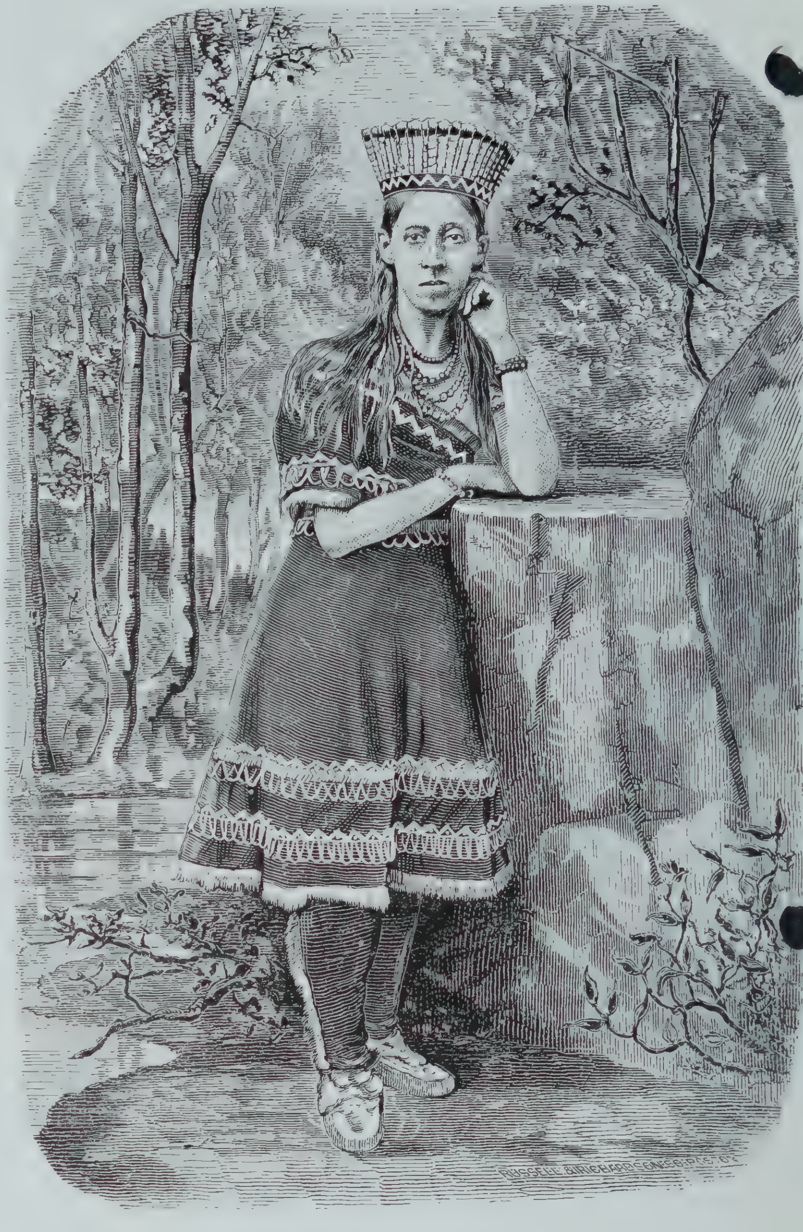
In the days of Old Dobbin the only thing a one horse vehicle needed was a feed bag three times a day, and occasional water. For an outing or a trip to town we put a bag of grain in the back of the old wagon—no car trunks or rumble seats—and for the rest of the fuel we figured on stopping at the various brooks along the way.

I recall quite a number of these "filling stations" as I look back over the years, especially when we lived at the old Fogg place on Thompson Street. (See Vol. VI, #1, Thompson Street Fifty Years Ago). Practically every brook around in those days had a turn-out where you could drive right off the road and through the water. After Dobbin had had his fill we would often move on a pace and let the wheels soak in the water. During the really hot weather the old wood wheels would get dried out, and without frequent moisture, fall apart. (However, they didn't blow out and wreck the wagon as these new balloon tires do now and then—and, they didn't require checking and testing, AND, they didn't cost a month's wages either.)

I'll name a few and hope that some of you may recall them. The most popular was on Thompson Street where Mr. Massey lives. We always stopped there on our way to church at The Green, Sundays, as well as on trips to town. There was another on Danson Brook, and still another on Thompson. Then there were the Bennett Brook on Plympton Street and Pratt's Brook on East Main Street. Many of you may remember others—where were they?

In those days there was no running water, and we kids had to pump it all by hand. These "filling stations" saved us a lot of work—but, shucks, you couldn't win—the cow, pigs and chickens had to be watered too, so we got plenty of good healthy exercise just the same.





PRINCESS TEWEELEEMA, (Melinda Mitchell), THE LAST OF THE WAMPANOAG TRIBE

(See Gladys Vigers' History of Town of Lakeville)

THE ABORIGINAL HISTORY OF MIDDLEBORO

(From an old scrap book)

Presented by a panel of five members at the February 1964 meeting of the Middleborough Historical Association.

In connection with a physical sanitary survey of Middleboro made by Dr. E. T. Whitney of Boston several years ago upon the occasion of his graduation from the Harvard Medical school and preserved in the archives of Harvard University, is the following aboriginal history of Middleboro.

. . . . That part of the Province of Plymouth which later was to be set apart as "Ye Towne of Middleberry" the Pilgrims found occupied by the Nemasket Indians, a tribe belonging to the Pokanoket Nation, one of the five principal Indian Confederacies occupying New England at that time. These Confederacies were made up of numerous tribes, each under the rule of a Sachem, and all the tribes under the control of a real Sachem, or "King," as he was called by the New England settlers.

A Pilgrim Father was not, however, the first white dweller in what is now Middleboro. History records that Thomas Dermer, a captain under John Smith, in 1619, a year and a half before the landing of the Pilgrims, rescued a Frenchman from

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the Nemaskets, where he had long resided as a slave to that tribe.

. . . . Dermer was accompanied from England by an Indian name Tisquantum, better known by the contracted name of "Squanto." He was one of the Indians captured by Hunt and later released or escaped from slavery and made his way to England.

It is known that for three years he had lived with a prominent English family where he had been well treated, and had accompanied Dermer on a former trip to New Foundland. He was making this trip as a native guide and interpreter for the captain and with expectations of then returning to his native tribe. Dermer dismissed his ship, laden with a cargo of furs and fish for England, and in a five ton open boat re-explored the coast from Maine to Cape Cod, and accompanied by Squanto, visited many Indian villages and tribes. The place designated on the map made by John Smith in 1614 as "New Plymouth" was at that time occupied by the Patuxet Indians, Squanto's native tribe. His homecoming after years of exile must have been a grievous disappointment to this Indian stoic, for he found to greet on his arrival only the bleached bones of his tribe, all of which had been wiped out by the great Indian plague of 1616-17-18.

. . . . A unique conference between a representative of a European Power and native Kings of this country, the first in history, took place on Muttock's Hill, Middleboro. On Capt. Dermer's departure, he left Squanto behind, who later was to figure prominently in the early history of the Pilgrims. . . . The parley was a momentous occasion for the Colonists. With much caution on both sides a parley was arranged, the Pilgrims offering hostages for the safe return of Massasoit and his followers. They received the great chief with much formality, gifts and all the hospitality they could offer. They set before him their best "strong water" and under its mellowing influence a friendly compact was entered into at which a peace treaty was drawn up and ratified by both parties, for an offensive and defensive alliance.

By its terms it was agreed that should either party be attacked by an enemy, the other would come to their assistance. While the treaty was of the greatest possible importance to the settlers, it was also a no less satisfactory one to Massasoit, whose tribes had been so weakened by the ravages of the great plague, that they stood in grave danger from attacks of the fierce Narragansetts, the Indian Confederacy to their south. The white settlers with their murderous guns should prove a most valuable ally and the satisfaction and pleasure of the Great Chief was most substantially expressed by donating to the Pilgrims the land they had already appropriated for their settlement, together with all the lands formerly occupied by the Patuxets. This included the present towns of Plymouth, Duxbury, Carver, Kingston, Plympton, Marshfield, Wareham and part of Halifax, extending from the coast inland to about the present boundary of Middleboro and included a part of this town as it was when incorporated. This treaty was fairly well kept by both sides until Massasoit's death some forty years later.

It was characteristic of the Indians to select for their habitations sightly locations where there were streams of fresh water, good hunting and fishing grounds, rich soil for the cultivation of their maize and high elevations the better to observe the approach of hostile enemies. The land of the Nemaskets was well supplied with these requirements. Their principal settlement, where their Sachem resided, was on Muttock's Hill, a high elevation on the Nemasket River a short distance from the village of Middleboro. There were two other settlements on the river and others around the shores of the beautiful Assawompsett. The favorable site selected by the Pilgrims for their immediate settlement, with its numerous acres of nearby tillage land, previously cleared by the Indians, was the former home of the Patuxet Indians, a neighboring tribe to the Nemaskets, that had been completely wiped out by some contagious disease shortly before the coming of the Colonists.

In the early summer, following the planting season, the settlers planned a return call of Massasoit's visit. The trip was undertaken by Edward Winslow and Stephen Hopkins with Squanto as guide. They took with them presents for the King, which included a scarlet coat and some fine laces, intending to stop the first night at "Nemaschet, a Towne under Massasoyt." This was the first visit of any Pilgrim to Nemasket, the present town of Middleboro, or any other Indian settlement. They were hospitably received and food placed before them consisting principally of "Maizum," described by the travelers as being made from acorns, shad roe and ground maize, or corn.

One month later the startling news was brought to the Pilgrims that Massasoit had been captured or driven from the country by the Narragansetts and that Corbitant was known to be actively hostile to the white settlers and a traitor to Massasoit with designs for replacing his chief as ruler of the Pokanokets. It being known to the Colonists that Corbitant was at Nemasket seeking the following of that tribe, they dispatched Squanto and Hobomok, a friend and councilor of Massasoit, to Nemasket, to secretly learn if possible the intentions of the traitor and the whereabouts of Massasoit. They were betrayed to Corbitant, who pronounced sentence of death on the two Indians, declaring that with Squanto out of the way, "the English would lose their tongue." As he personally approached Squanto to execute the sentence, Hobomok, an Indian of powerful physique, broke away from his guard and escaped. He hurriedly made his return to the settlers where he reported the details and his belief that Squanto had been killed. A well-armed military expedition of fourteen men under Miles Standish was hastily dispatched to Nemasket, with orders for the beheading of Corbitant in the event of Squanto's death. A midnight surprise attack was made on the lodge pointed out as his by Hobomok. With terrifying discharges of their firearms, a warfare new to the natives, they burst in on the terror-stricken braves, but found that the wily Sachem and his followers had fled, and fearing the vengeance of the settlers, had refrained from the slaughter of Squanto. A court martial was held the next morning at Nemasket village, following this first military expedition in New England, at which all the natives repudiated Corbitant and pledged their allegiance to Massasoit.

. . . . It is not known when the first Pilgrim made a permanent settlement in what is now Middleboro, many of the earlier records having been destroyed or lost in the Indian war that followed Massasoit's death. Until 1627, the Pilgrims lived as a community centre, all property, both real and personal, being held as common property. The Pilgrims were joint stockholders in a company formed in London, the financiers being designated in the company's articles of agreement, as "Adventurers," and those donating their personal services, as the "Planters." The value of the shares were placed at ten pounds each and each able-bodied "Planter" sixteen years or more of age, rated as one share, and if he contributed to the cause, a wife, servant, a child over sixteen years of age or commodities of ten pounds value, each such contribution constituted an additional share to his credit. Children under sixteen and over ten years of age were rated as half a share. The purpose of the company was to make profits by trading, fishing, planting or by any legitimate means of money making that might occur in the settlement of a new country. At the end of seven years, the profits, real estate and personal property was to be equally distributed among the shareholders and the company dissolved.

. . . . Reference is made in records filed in 1662, of purchases made from the Indians at Titicut in Middleboro, as early as 1633, but it was a quarter of a century from the time of the Pilgrims' deliverance from the Adventurers before they came in numbers to settle in Middleboro. This data is substantiated to some degree by the records of the First Church of Christ, established here on December 26, 1694, which commenced with the quotation from Deut. 8:2: "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord, thy God, hath led thee these forty years." It is reasonable to suppose this quotation was meant literally, as it was written into the records by the pastor, Mr. Samuel Fuller, who had preached to the Middleboro settlers since before the burning of the town by the Indians in 1675-76.

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MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS

. . . . What the number was of these early settlers, who they were, about the interesting details concerning the organization of the little town and of its social and civic affairs for the following six years, we have limited knowledge for its records shared in the destruction of the town itself in its early infancy. From the Plymouth records, in deeds of lands purchased from the Indians, as office holders, from the record of birth and deaths, in family note books and various other similar sources, we find the names of some sixty pre-war residents. A large percentage of these were children and grandchildren of the Pilgrim Fathers. Two are recorded as original passengers of the Mayflower, Francis Billington and Samuel Eaton.

. . . . Their cabins were erected on little farms purchased, or traded for, from the Indians for the owner's individual needs, but the Colonists were ever ready to see any advantage in a trade and anticipating future values in real estate, commenced a heavy speculation in the Indian lands of Middleboro some years before its incorporation. The first big transaction was made on March 7, 1661, when the Indian Sachem Wampatucke sold to Capt. Southworth on behalf of the Court, the northern part of the present Middleboro and part of Halifax, east of the Nemasket River and north of "the Indian trail to Plimouth from the wading place at the Nemmassakett River." This was called the upper trail. There were two Indian paths leading from Plymouth to Nemasket which converged into one shortly before reaching the wading place located near the present bridge that crosses the Nemasket River on East Main Street. The wading place was a prominent land mark in designating directions and running bounds.

. . . . The purchase of the big tract of land deeded by Wampatucke to Capt. Southworth was made in the interests of twenty-six original purchasers and is known as "The Twenty-six Men's Purchase." According to the Plymouth Registry of Deeds the purchase was made for the sum of ten pounds. Many of the original owners figured prominently in the early history of the town. Three of the number, Francis Cook, John Howland, and George Soule were passengers in the Mayflower and several were later purchasers in other large tracts of Indian lands in Middleboro.

. . . . The largest deal made was known as the "Sixteen Shilling Purchase," which comprised practically the whole of what was later set apart as the town of Lakeville, and embraced the whole of Assawompsett, Elders and Pocksha Ponds and nearly all of Great and Little Quitticas and Long Ponds. It was sold on May 14, 1673, for thirty-three pounds and divided among seventy-one purchasers.

. . . . All Indian place names were descriptive of the locality to which they were attached, more particularly of the peculiar characteristics of the place itself. A list follows of Indian place names still retained in the former territory of "The Towne of Middleberry," together with interesting probable derivations and translations.

Nemasket, Namasket, Namaschet, Namaskett, Namassacut, Nammasstaquet.

The former Indian name for Middleboro, the name of the Indian tribe that occupied it, and earlier name for Assawompsett Pond and the retained present name of the river that flows from it into the Taunton River. The name is also applied to a small settlement and railroad station in Middleboro as well as to the hotel, many business firms and societies. Its derivation was probably from Namas—"fish"; auk—"place;" et—"at or near."

Assawampsett, Assawompsett, Assowamsett.

A large pond in Middleboro and Lakeville, the largest sheet of fresh water in the state. . . For many years in the latter part of the eighteenth century much iron ore of fair grade was mined from its shallow depths. . . . The word is probably from three Indian words, (n) asha—"middle" "between" or "halfway," omps—"an upright or prominent rock," and et—"at" or "near." "At or near the half-way rock." The name probably applied to the prominent rock on which the village of Rock now stands which was about half-way between Plymouth and Massasoit's headquarters. . . .

. . . . Muttock.

A high and picturesque elevation on the westerly side of the Nemasket River, about a mile below the "wading place" and a short distance north of the present village of Middleboro . . . . The name Muttock was a contraction of Kehesemuttugh—"great shoulders" . . . .

. . . . Tispaquin, Tispequin, Tespaquin, Tuspaquin, Tuspequin.

. . . . Tispaquin was probably the son of the Pond Sachem. He took for a squaw a daughter of Massasoit and was therefore a brother-in-law of King Philip.

. . . . Titicut, Teghtacutt, Kehtehticut, Cutuhtikut, Catuhtut, Tetiquid.

This word was probably originally Kehtehticut, from kehti—"chief" "greatest," tuck—"large river." The name was abbreviated and corrupted to Titicut.

. . . . Fall Brook.

The Indian name for it was Sawcomet, given as a boundary in Tispaquin's deed of the Henry Wood Purchase of August 9, 1667, "to that part of ye brook that is stony like to a fall, called Sawcomet."

. . . . The word Massasoit meant "Great Chief." [Massasoit died in 1661. He was succeeded by his son Alexander, who was succeeded by another son, Wamsutta, who was succeeded by Massasoit's second son, Philip.] Philip was the leader of the bloodiest and most destructive Indian War of New England. . . Philip feared the encroachment upon their lands of the white settlers and early in his reign commenced scheming with all the neighboring Sachems he could influence for the extermination of the Colonists. . . . His plans had not been completed when the murder of the Indian, John Sassamond, precipitated the war fully a year ahead of his intentions. John Sassamond had been a student at Harvard, was a protege of the Indian apostle, John Eliot, and was appointed a preacher at the Indian church at Nemasket. He had acted as a secretary to Philip and having knowledge of his intentions, his loyalty to the whites led him to disclose the plans against the Colonists to the authorities at Plymouth. . . . Knowledge of his act reached Philip, who plotted his death, and a week later he was murdered while fishing through the ice on Assawompasett Pond at Middleboro by one of Philip's councillors, who with two others placed the body under the ice where it was discovered shortly afterwards. The murder was witnessed by an Indian on "King Philip's Lookout" situated nearby and testified to on the following spring. This led to the capture, trial and execution of the murderers, which so enraged Philip that he at once commenced hostilities. Several skirmishes took place in Middleboro but the records disclose but three deaths at the hands of the Indians, the inhabitants of the town having taken refuge in the fort previously constructed by order of the court.

. . . . With the fall of Philip, [August 12, 1676], there followed the close of the war in so far as it applied to the Colonies. . . . In June of the following year the former residents of Middleboro entered into an agreement to re-settle the town. They received a warrant from the Governor of the Colonies under the date of June 9, 1677, granted to them as the "Proprietors of the Towne of Middleberry," giving them the right to take re-possession of the territory which at that time consisted of the present Middleboro, the western part of Halifax from the Winnetuxet River and the whole of Lakeville, and to apportion the land among the former owners or their representatives and make necessary laws for its resettlement. A meeting was held for this purpose at Plymouth on the 27th of the same month, following which the sixty-seven "Proprietors of the Town" commenced the labor of rebuilding Middleboro. . .

MIDDLEBOROUGH'S GYPSIES

Lyman Butler

How many of you can remember the times when every Summer a tribe of Gypsies came to Middleborough? (Ed's. note: I remember as kids we were scared to death of them in Morristown, N.J.)

I remember when I was just about school age and we lived in Warrentown a tribe that camped on the flat iron piece at the corner of Precinct Street where Norman Quindley built his house. The old Muttock School was still standing then, and they drove their wagons in the yard and pitched their tents in the cleared lot in the back. They always had horses, and I believe horse trading was one of their means of making a living. I know my Father traded horses with them once, and believe he had to "give boot," as the old saying goes. Some of the women-folk told fortunes for a small fee. Although there were several children in the outfit, we were told not to go near the camp,—but you know kids. We snuck down once in a while anyway. In those days almost everyone mistrusted Gypsies, and although some tribes may have been a bunch of rascals, the ones that came to Middleborough as their Summer home were respectable folks who preferred that nomadic way of life. (Ed's. note: If you study too many doctors, lawyers, ministers, bankers, publishers or Mr. Everyman, you'll find a good many crooks.)

This tribe was composed of two families named Stanley, and I believe some of their family are still living in Onset. Down Route 28, before you come to Buttermilk Bay, there is a little house with a sign that reads Palmistry; this is one of the descendants of our Middleborough tribe. Another of the Stanleys operates a construction business.

Going back again to 1910, we used to envy their way of life. They lived in tents, cooked over open fires and to us kids lived the life of Riley. If it rained, they simply threw a tarp with a couple of stakes and made a lean-to to protect the fire. I imagine they liked this spot because it was near the brook that came up from Precinct Street. Plenty of water for the animals, and plenty of water for washing and scrubbing clothes. The firewood was free for the cutting—if you didn't get caught.

They only stayed a few weeks, and then traveled on. Where they went in the winter I never knew. Perhaps they went south like the birds, and like the birds, came right back to Massachusetts every year. Although the younger generations of Stanleys probably live in modern houses today, I'll bet some of them can look back and wish they were gypsies once again, looking for a place to pitch their tents.

THE HUSKING BEE

Lyman Butler

In the days before movies, radio and TV, folks had to make their own entertainment. Of course you may have read of husking bees before, but these were right here in Middleborough—and I went to them. The women had their quilting bees, and the men often had stag parties where they discussed the farm situation, and at both affairs a good time was had by all. However, the husking bees were more informal and more fun.

Most every farmer in those days had a corn crib where he stored whole corn on the cob for winter. Before the frost came, the corn would be cut and stacked in the fields to dry out. Later the ears were picked from the stalks and dumped in huge piles on the barn floor. The stalks were saved to feed the cows. (Nothing was wasted in those days; it was known as Yankee economy—and I wish we had a bit more of it today. Ed's. note)

When the ears were properly dried out, the farmer invited all his neighbors in for a husking bee. Anyone with children—and they all had 'em—brought them along as the word baby sitter wasn't even in the dictionary at that time. With a husking bee in mind, the farmers usually planted a few red kernels to add to the fun; if you got a red ear in your pile of work, you could kiss anyone at the party. After the corn was all husked and stored in the crib, refreshments were served—cider and doughnuts—and if there was music available, a square dance followed.

I well remember the first one I went to. I was about seven and sat right in with the grown-ups and husked what I could. After a bit I came to a red ear, and everyone said "Go ahead and kiss her." There were no young girls there, and I wouldn't have known what to do anyway—so finally the women got together and smooched me a plenty. Boy, I'll bet my ears were redder that that durned ear of corn. All in all the old husking bees were real fun.

A BRIEF HISTORY 1852 TO 1926.

This is the title of an illustrated brochure presented to the museum by Mrs. William P. Winberg. The brochure is titled "Dedication of the Central Fire Station, December Thirty, Nineteen Twenty-Six." The history is on page two. Since we have no record of other copies, perhaps this brief history will be of interest.

"The Middleboro Fire Department has an honorable history of nearly three-quarters of a century. The incorporation of the Fire District in 1852 was followed in the same year by organization of Bay State Engine Company No. 1., and three years later, of Enterprise Hook and Ladder Company. The Bay State Company was disbanded June 1, 1882, after 30 years of usefulness, and was succeeded by Chemical Engine Company No. 1. The Hook and Ladder Company proved more tenacious, and maintained itself for forty years, until 1915, when its membership was transferred to Ladder No. 1 of the modernized department.

The Young Mechanic Engine Company No. 1, organized in 1876, became Hose Company No. 6, January 6, 1886, and as the "Sixes" has an enviable record for twenty-eight years until in 1914 it became Hose Company No. 2. The years from 1886 to 1889 saw the formation of the other four hose companies, one at the School Street house, and the others in small houses at various strategic locations, each of which maintained a separate existence until consolidated in 1912. These with the Chemical Engine Company No. 1 formed the nucleus of the new department which came into being with the purchase of Middleboro's first piece of motor-driven apparatus, the Knox combination, October 1st, 1912. The other units of the motor equipment were installed in 1914, 1915 and 1920. It is perhaps worthy of note that Middleboro never had an era of horse drawn fire apparatus; the transition in power was directly from man to motor.

It was thirty-four years after the department was first organized that the town water system was installed in 1886, and the Gamewell fire alarm came into use in 1889. The real veteran of the department is the School Street station, built in 1856, now battle-scarred and supported by a veritable forest of timbers and posts in its basement, and now, after three score and ten years gracefully laying down its responsibilities, and yielding up to its spacious and handsome successor the duty and privilege of housing the thoroughly up-to-date Department of 1926."

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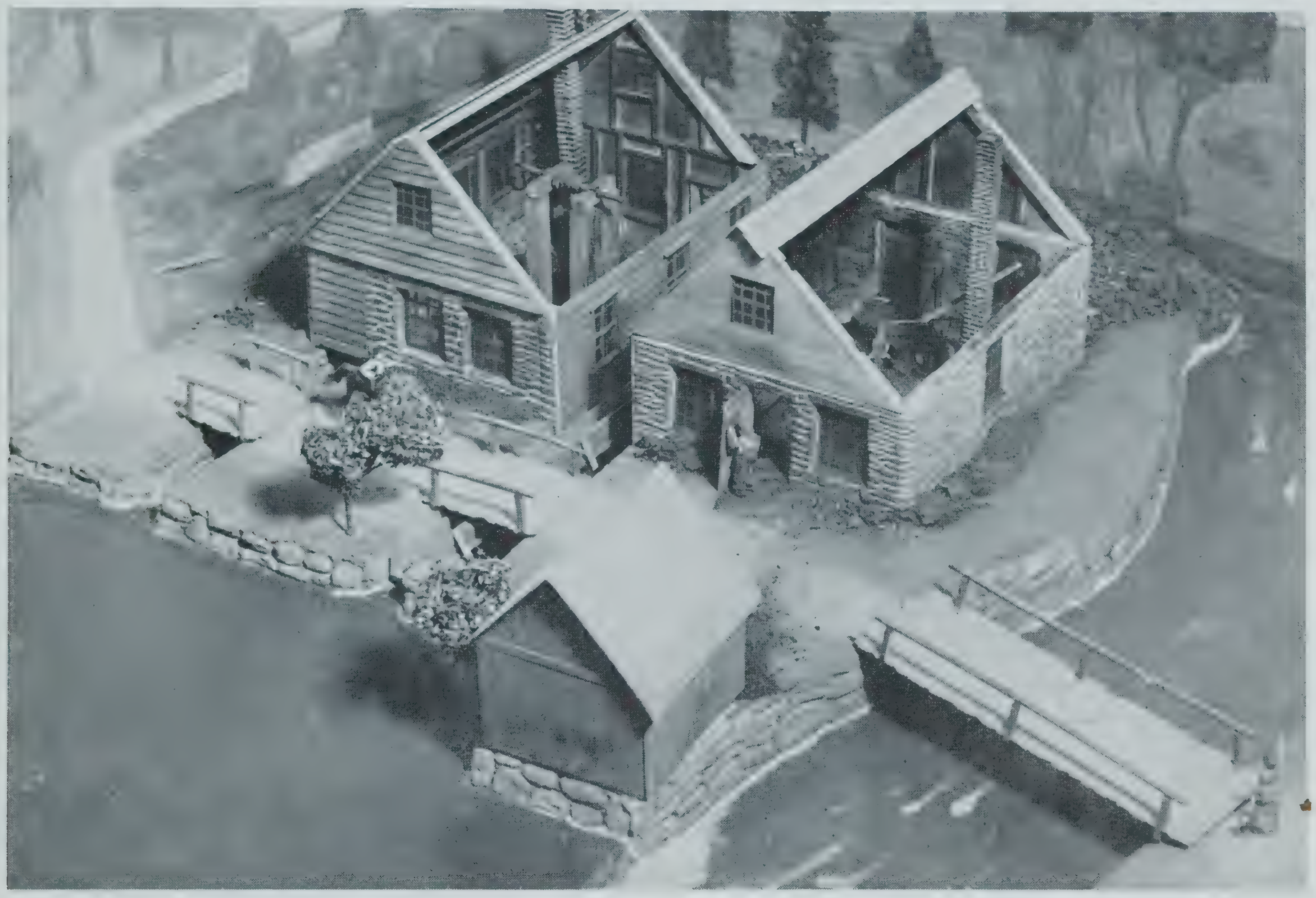

MODEL OF 19th CENTURY SHOVEL WORKS
BY TED EAYRS
(Photo by Clint Clark)

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF JUDGE OLIVER'S IRONWORKS

By Frederick Eayrs, Jr.

PREFACE

Deeply buried in the annals of the **History of Middleborough** are a few scattered pages devoted to Judge Oliver, his home, his position, and his ironworks. This is all that remains in tribute to an outstanding person in the pre-war colony of Massachusetts. It was said that his fidelity and loyalty cost him a place among the great men of the state. In this paper I have recorded the facts of his life and the function of his ironworks. This was compiled out of two and one half years of painstaking research and archaeological excavation. The task is by no means complete. In the short span of two and one half years one cannot possibly excavate and piece together a site of such magnitude and complexity.

It may be of some interest to learn how I become interested in such a project. It all began in January of my sophomore year of high school. At this time I attended a lecture by Dr. Maurice Robbins on an "Archaic Indian Village in Middleborough" which had been excavated by the Massachusetts Archaeological Society. I became intrigued with the science of archaeology and so, with the school science fair approaching, I decided to enter a project on the excavation. When the science fair was over, however, my interest did not diminish. After exhibiting my project in a local drugstore, I received a letter from Dr. Robbins who complimented me on my work. It was with this inspiration that I joined the Massachusetts Archaeological Society.

Through "digging" with the Society, I learned the Archaeological Method and the organizational information necessary for an excavation. This training I decided to put to work in conducting my own excavation. The site I chose was once the site of Judge Oliver's Ironworks. In earlier years I visited the spot many times. Even as far back as the fifth grade, I had endeavored to explore the site which yielded many bricks, nailrods, and pieces of slag.[a] The owner of a brick factory informed me that the bricks I had uncovered were about two hundred and fifty years old. And so in the late spring of 1962 I gathered the necessary materials to go to work.

It was with good fortune that the first spot in which I dug yielded the remains of a furnace. I dug constantly and consulted the society very closely but gradually my personal information afforded me the privilege of archaeological analyzation. During the winter months I composed my findings into a science fair project which I entered into competition. In early March, I was indeed fortunate in having Roland Robbins, a professional archaeologist,[b] visit the site. He gave me more invaluable information concerning "digging method" and early iron manufacture. In the summer, I did more extensive research as well as several site visitations. With the coming of autumn, I began

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construction of a scale model replica of the shovel works which flourished at the site in the nineteenth century. This model will be placed in The Oliver Room of the Middleborough Historical Museum.

In preparing this paper, numerous problems developed in the pattern of organization. It is for this reason that I have prepared each topic separately and have written each from beginning to end. This method, although perhaps a little confusing at first, is much smoother in the long run.

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[a] Slag can be described most easily as the scum of molten iron.

[b] Mr. Robbins' excavations include the Saugus Ironworks, Thoreau's cabin at Walden Pond, and Old Jamestown, Va.

THE PETER OLIVER FAMILY

Part I

Peter Oliver, for whom the works were named, was born the youngest son of Daniel Oliver, a prominent merchant of Boston, in 1713. Of wealthy parentage, Oliver received an education at Harvard, class of 1730, and married Mary Clark in 1733, also of Boston. Although he entered no profession, he was a man of much color and culture. Peter Oliver always had a reputation for his scholarly opinions, fearless independence, and steadfast loyalty to his friends and to his King.

With this background, he settled in Middleborough, Massachusetts in 1744.[1] Although the town, founded in 1669, was small, the presence of iron deposits had been realized. All that was needed was an individual with enough capital to finance and operate an ironworks of sufficient magnitude to make the extraction of the ore worthwhile. Therefore Oliver bought up the land and water privileges about the Muttock section of the Nemasket River, and immediately following he began construction of the ironworks.

Oliver also constructed his permanent home called Oliver Hall. It was built in the style of an English mansion and in its time was considered one of the finest residences outside of Boston.[2] It stood on a level tract of land atop a hill, adjacent to the Ironworks site. As a part of his grounds he enclosed a large area on the Hall side of the Nemasket River, which served as a park and garden. The main entrance to the estate was through an avenue of trees. The Hall itself was constructed of white plaster with a portico of oak. Much of the furniture was of English craftsmanship and very costly. Oliver Hall also contained a library which accommodated many exquisite volumes of legal, religious, and historic significance. Oliver's home served as the reception place for many high-ranking nobility as well as the fashionable people of Boston. In their diaries Judge Sewall and John Adams comment on the beauty of the Hall and their good times there.[3]

His scholastic prominence and patriotic loyalties afforded him the privilege of appointment to the Court of Common Pleas residing at Plymouth. He served in this position with the utmost dignity and honor from 1748 to 1756.[4] The old County Court files still bear witness to this by their legal narratives of all cases judged by Oliver. His reputation as judge became so much acclaimed that hereafter he was called "Judge" Oliver, hence Judge Oliver's Ironworks. The Court of Common Pleas served as a stepping-stone, for in 1756 he was appointed to serve on the Superior Court of Massachusetts.[5] His distinction as a Judge in high standing as well as a prominent business man made him the authority in the town. History has it that once a citizen asked if, in some matter of state, the King had done right. The Judge diplomatically replied, "As to that I cannot say, but he has the power."[6]

During these years Oliver became a large and successful real estate owner as well as a rich ironmaster.[7] While a member of the Superior Court, he presided at the Boston Massacre trial in 1770 and in 1772 he was appointed Chief Justice of the Commonwealth.[7] Oliver was the last to serve in this position under the provincial government. At about this time, the fires of the Revolution were being kindled throughout the colonies. The radical movement in the state frequently and violently attacked the King's government. By 1774, Oliver's opposition to this movement made him one of the most intensely hated men in Massachusetts. This hatred was so concerted as to warrant the burning of his effigy.[8] When the Revolution finally came, Oliver was extremely obnoxious to the patriots. He was impeached by Samuel Adams for receiving a salary from the crown and soon after was expelled from Middleborough. Oliver came once again to the town which had formerly loved him and now bitterly hated him.[9] He entered his home and surveyed the place of so much happiness; then he hastily left for Boston where, on March 17, 1776, he sailed to England,[10] never to return again. (It's too bad that the patriots underrated such loyalty.)

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With the advent of the Revolution, Oliver removed most of the furniture to Plymouth; however the end came on the night of November 4, 1778. While Washington suffered in the bitter cold of a place called Valley Forge, a large group of Middleborough "patriots" gathered at Muttock.[11] Soon flames, which had devoured many other Tory estates, encompassed Oliver Hall. Eventually the land was plowed under and now no trace may be seen of the gallant home of the prominent Judge.

Judge and Mary Oliver had raised a family of four children: Andrew, William, Daniel, and Peter, Jr.[12] Peter, Jr., like his father, graduated from Harvard. He studied and became a lawyer, but did not practice in Middleborough. In 1770 Peter, Jr. married Sally Hutchinson,[13] the daughter of Governor Hutchinson. There is some question as to the happiness of this union for in the diary of Dr. Oliver[14] we find this amusing note of the "end of the happiest time of my life." With Judge Oliver in his noble position, it is quite possible that the marriage was planned by the parents of the couple. Prior to the wedding, the Judge constructed for his son a home located across the river from Oliver Hall. The "Summer House" as it was called by Governor Hutchinson, remains today restored and treasured by Mrs. Peter Oliver, the wife of the late Peter Oliver, descended from the same family. Dr. Oliver and his wife Sally were host to such famous people as Dr. Benjamin Franklin and James Bowdoin.[15]

As for the other children, William settled down in Middleboro, Andrew resided in Boston where he distributed stamps in accord with the Stamp Act of 1765,[16] and Daniel also resided in Boston.

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SITE OF OLIVER'S WORKS & HERRING RUN CA. 1900
(Photo, courtesy of Walter Eayrs)

EARLY INDUSTRIALIZATION

Part II

The name Muttock is derived from Chessemuttock,[17] the name of an Indian tribe which dwelt on the brow of the hill on which Oliver built his home. Here the tribe lived until 1734 when they moved to Titicut.[18] White men first visited the area in 1621 when settlers from Plymouth stopped on their way to visit Massasoit. The area remained barren until 1734 when a dam replaced the old Indian fishing weir.[19] In that same year, Benjamin White, Samuel Eddy, Joseph Bumpus, Shubael Tinkham and Mrs. Thomas petitioned the court for free consent to build a slitting-mill on the land of Moses Sturtevant. The petition was granted in spite of protest that the industry would disturb the free passage of ale wives[20] in the spring. This group therefore proceeded to construct a forge, slitting-mill, and grist-mill across the river. The project was financed by various people in the town who invested in shares. Although some production was carried on, it may be fairly calculated a failure.[21]

It was at this time that Peter Oliver moved to Middleborough. He, obviously attracted by the prospects for a successful industry, quickly bought up the various shares held in the existing industry and began construction of his own on a more expensive scale. We may judge that he renovated the existing buildings and constructed a blast furnace called Oliver's Furnace.[22] At this time two points should be made. The first concerns the Ironworks site. At Muttock the river is especially wide. Therefore, when a dam was constructed across the river, it provided a great potential for industry. Also it should be realized that the dam served a dual purpose. It primarily served as a means of retaining the necessary water for a water-powered industry and it was the only road by which wagons could cross the river. The present bridge was constructed in 1859, although one was built in 1818.[23] A second item concerns the iron industry. In Oliver's time, the manufacture of pure iron was a big business. Iron was the metal to the early settlers. With it they built their houses, trapped their food, prepared and ate their food. All household utensils were produced exclusively of iron.

There is an interesting incident[24] surrounding the construction of the second slitting-mill. It should be here realized that the slitting process is a very difficult one, especially during the early years of settlement in America. For instance, the metal had to be precisely the same temperature inside as outside before it was rolled.[25] Any deviation would rupture the metal. Also the rolls would often break and have to be replaced. Apparently the existing slitting mill had been unsuccessful in reducing the iron so a new method had to be found. At this time there was but one other mill in the country, and this well guarded, outside of Boston. Oliver, at this time, hired Hushai Thomas, a man of remarkable mechanical skill, to build him a slitting-mill which would produce nail-rods equal to any produced in the country. Shortly afterward, Thomas disappeared from town and "some apprehension was manifested lest evil had befallen him." However, it was noticed that his wife and children did not share the anxiety of the townspeople. Several days later, a strange, unkempt man appeared near Boston. He developed a friendship with the children who played about the site of the Boston mill. One day, finding the door open, he innocently ran in. One glance at the intricate workings and the process was fixed in his mind. Soon after he left, returned to Middleborough, and constructed a slitting-mill which produced nail-rods surpassed by none. The validity of this incident remains permanently buried in the annals of history.

Middleborough at this time was one of the largest towns in the Province of Massachusetts.[26] It had a leading industry in the ironworks owned by the Judge and a center of culture in the Oliver home. However at the time of the Revolution, the property was confiscated by the Colonial Legislature.[27] The works were then sold and managed by different men. Although it undoubtedly produced many cannon during the Revolution, with the war over, business was curtailed and as was the fate of many others it fell into bankruptcy.

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[1] Thomas Weston, History of Middleborough, Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1906, p. 359.
[2] **Ibid.**, p. 374.
[3] **Ibid.**, p. 364-365.
[4] Albert Hart, **Commonwealth History of Massachusetts**, vol. II, p. 184. New York: The States History Co., 1928.
[5] **Ibid.**
[6] Thomas Weston, **op. cit.**, p. 147.
[7] **Ibid.**, p. 362.
[8] Hart, **op. cit.**, p. 184
[9] Weston, **op. cit.**, p. 360
[10] **Ibid.**, p. 362.
[11] **Ibid.**, p. 370.
[12] William married a sister of one Captain John Fuller and lived in Middleboro near his wife's father. Andrew Oliver married one Phoebe Spooner and also resided locally. It is said that at the time of the marriage Mr. Spooner was so much opposed to it that he disinherited his daughter. **Ibid.**, p. 373.
[13] **Ibid.**, p. 367.
[14] Peter Oliver, Jr., received a doctorate degree and was called Dr. Oliver.
[15] Bowdoin College. President of the committee to adopt a Mass. Constitution.
[16] The act which caused much animosity for the English Crown.
[17] lit. broad-shouldered.
[18] A spot located on the Taunton River in N. Middleborough.
[19] **Weston**, op. cit., p. 359.
[20] Ale wives are a member of the herring family and every spring return upstream to spawn their young.
[21] This is derived from the fact that Oliver had to reconstruct the industries present. Also the fact that shares were so easy to come by.
[22] It is believed that previous iron smelting was done in the forge.
[23] Weston, **op. cit.**, p. 381.
[24] This incident is taken from the **History of Middleborough**, Weston, **op. cit.**, p. 361-362.
[25] To be discussed further on page 12.
[26] **op. cit.**, p. 373.
[27] **op. cit.**, p. 364.

To be continued in Vol. VII, No. 1

EUGENE'S RESTAURANT

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HISTORY OF THE MIDDLEBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL

A paper read by Mrs. Annie D. (Mrs. Leonidas) Deane at the midwinter meeting of the Middleborough High School Alumni Association, December 27, 1895, upon which was based the program of the Middleborough Historical Association, April 6, 1964.

In 1849, a man named Thomas Covington, and it is a singular fact that he lived in the old house which stood where our High School (later the Bates School) building of to-day stands, ambitious that his daughter should be instructed in the higher branches, arose in town meeting and said he was prepared to begin a lawsuit against the town at once if they did not take some action in regard to establishing a High School. Accordingly, in the report of the town meeting held August 6, 1849, we find, "Voted, to establish a High School as the law directs."

In the School Committee's report for the year '40-'50, which was the first report to be printed, we find this article: "Your Committee have attended to the duty assigned to them by the town in relation to the High School, and report as follows: The first term commenced in the vestry of Rev. Dr. Putnam's church, which was the church at the Green, under the instruction of Ephraim Ward, Jr. Number of scholars, 21. The results were very satisfactory. The second term was taught in the schoolhouse in District No. 20, Titicut, with the same teacher as principal. Number of pupils, 55." And the report goes on to say: "Your Committee share in the prevalent feeling of the town that the money expended for this school might be more usefully appropriated for the use of our other schools. The probable expense of the school will be about $400 for the year."

In the School Committee's report for '50-'51 we find this report of the High School: "The third term was held in the schoolhouse of District No. 22, the same leader fourth term, schoolhouse of District No. 31; fifth term was in charge of Rev. Mr. Simonds, school held in District No. 15. Whole number of scholars, 29."

From a digest of school laws printed at that time we find the following law pertaining to High Schools: "Any town, containing 500 families, shall, besides the common schools, maintain a school, to be kept by a master of competent ability and good morals, who shall in addition to the branches of learning already mentioned, give instruction in History of the United States, book-keeping, surveying and algebra, and such school must be kept for the benefit of all the inhabitants of the town, ten months at least in each year."

Middleborough and Lakeville being one town, it probably contained the required number of families to support a High School, which was undoubtedly the reason for its existence at this time. After this year, 1850, the High School seems to have "sunk into oblivion," for we find not the remotest allusion to it in the following reports of the School Committee, no doubt on account of setting off of Lakeville as a town by itself.

In 1865, we find the subject of a High School being agitated. The law of the State made it necessary for every town having 4,000 inhabitants to maintain a school for all, having a teacher qualified to teach besides the common branches of study, the higher branches, also the languages. And the Committee earnestly recommended that such a school be established and maintained, as it would raise the standard of education in the town, and be a means of improving the district schools, since the scholars would be ambitious to qualify themselves for the honor of being a member of the High School; and that it would be much the better way to have it located in some place near the center of the town, as the idea of a movable High School was not practicable.

At the annual town meeting of 1867, it was voted to appropriate $1,000 for a town High School, and the Committee was instructed to locate said school in four different sections of the town; but for lack of scholars, no school was established in but two sections.

At the Rock, the Rev. F. G. Pratt taught the fall term. There being no suitable building in the center for the High School, the Committee availed themselves of an offer made to the town by the Trustees of the Peirce Academy, and placed the school in their building. The services of an enthusiastic teacher were secured, Mr. C. A. Cole, who taught about a year. The Committee felt that a High School which should be the "head-center" of our system of common schools was now well started.

In 1868, Mr. Elbridge Cushman, who was one of the Committee, taught the school at the Rock. At the center, the chapel of the Congregational church was hired and Mr. Charles A. Smart, a graduate of Brown University, and Mr. S. J. Dike, a graduate of Amherst, were the teachers. It was in this year that the new law was enacted allowing towns to transport scholars at the public expense, and the Committee suggested that the town authorize them to pay a certain sum "for the transportation of scholars so that the whole town, instead of a part, would patronize the school."

In the year 1869, a supplement to the High School was taught at North Middleborough by Rev. H. L. Edwards in the form of a Latin class of about ten pupils, also, a branch High School at the Rock by Elbridge Cushman. In this year the Academy building was hired at a rent of $300 per year, as it did not seem advisable to erect a building suitable for the purpose. The first term was taught by Mr. Henry Dame, and the remainder of the year by G. F. Robinson.

The standard of admission was low, and no attempt to classify the pupils had been attempted, and a three years' course of study was recommended by the Committee. At the town meeting in March, 1871, the town voted $300 to pay traveling expenses to and from the High School; consequently there was but one school during the year which was held in Academy building, the first term taught by Mr. G. F. Robinson. For the remainder of the year the school was under the instruction of Prof. J. W. P. Jenks, and through him the pupils enjoyed advantages of the extensive cabinet and apparatus belonging to Peirce Academy. He attempted to organize the school upon a plan of a three years' course of study, arranging for three courses, English, English and classical and classical.

The summer term of the next year was taught by Misses Lydia and Ella Robinson, both graduates of our higher seminaries. They resigned at the close of the term, and Mr. E. E. Parker, a Dartmouth graduate, took their places. During his third term, the first regular assistant was employed, Miss Annie D. Pratt, later Mrs. Leonidas Deane. At the close of this term Mr. Parker resigned, greatly to the regret of the Committee. The services of Mr. A. W. Blair were secured, another Dartmouth graduate. He labored faithfully to establish a course of study which should be strictly adhered to, in order that a class might be prepared for graduation. At the close of one year he resigned, to be followed by Mr. George H. Adams, who only remained one term.

A third Dartmouth graduate, Mr. J. H. Willoughby, followed. Although there had been a frequent change of teachers, the Committee felt that the High School was making commendable progress. With the coming of Mr. Willoughby, the school took possession of the large and pleasant rooms provided for it in the new and elegant Town House, just completed, in 1874. It occupied four rooms. Mr. Willoughby succeeded in getting the school well classified, and formed a graduating class from those who had been in the school for a number of years. During this year drawing was introduced into the High School, and a special teacher was employed, Miss Anna C. Eddy. Two courses of study were arranged at this time, English and classical, and English.

At the close of the school year in June, 1876, a class for the first time was graduated from the High School. I think the names of this class should be mentioned: Mariquita P. Eddy, Annie E. Leach, Mattie Lovell, Minnie D. Case, Helena Shaw, Annah Soule, J. Harvey Doane, Andrew J. Bisbee.

A large class entered with the fall term, and the High School has not failed of its graduating class from that year to this, although the second class to graduate numbered but one lone member, Walton Clark. The school continued with only one assistant until 1885, when a second assistant was employed.

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At the close of the summer term of 1886, Mr. Willoughby severed his connection with the school, after a term of service of nearly thirteen years and the principals immediately following were Dr. Charles S. Ober, who taught one term, to be followed by Mr. A. K. Potter, Jr., a graduate of Brown University

In 1886 we find our High School in a new and costly building, with the largest enrollment since its existence, 110, and with the next year a third assistant was employed.

In the year 1890, Mr. Potter resigned his position and Walter Sampson took his place. And we are glad to say that we had him thirty years. We feel that it has been the determined purpose of his work to raise the standard of the school. Although there have been many and frequent changes among the assistants, still our High School has made progress in the right direction. We have a school of which we are justly proud, though we have bright anticipations for the future when our High School shall occupy a building exclusively its own, with the necessary rooms and appliances for its greatest growth.

In closing, a list of the assistant teachers in their order of service is presented. Miss Pratt resigned in 1878, and Miss R. E. Stacy came. Miss Stacy was succeeded by Miss Folger, who came in the fall term of 1879. In 1882 Miss Grace Robertson came for one year, when Miss Folger returned. In 1885 Miss Dora Pierce, now Mrs. G. G. Leonard, an additional assistant, was employed. Miss Zilpha Chace and Miss Mary Emerson followed, with Miss Mary Chace next in line, to be succeeded by Miss Frances Nichols, then Miss Sadie M. Lake, Miss Etta L. Chapman, Miss Ella MacGregor and Miss Mabel B. Woodbury, A.B. In 1893, Miss Zilpha Chace, first assistant, resigned, greatly to the regret of all, to be followed by Miss Annie M. Greene, first assistant, with Miss Josephine Hodgdon and Miss F. Gertrude Coolidge as second and third assistants. Then came Miss Grace Allen, Miss Susie J. Mantle and Miss Jennie Bennett. Miss Mantle, resigning her place, was followed by Miss Alice Collins.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES IN THE YEARS 1898 AND 1899

By the Late Ernest S. Pratt

One bright and sunny August day in 1898, our family decided to take an outing at Plymouth Beach. We hitched the "driving horse" to the surrey "with the fringe on top," and had a pleasant trip to Plymouth. This horse, incidentally, was a recently purchased ex-trotting horse, which had not quite made the money, but was relegated to become a good roadster.

We embarked on the "Mary Chilton," a small steam yacht (no gasoline yachts at this time), which plied between Plymouth Harbor and the outer beach. We spent a very delightful day, picnicking near the Hotel and Pavilion. As the afternoon drew on, we returned to Plymouth, where Father had stabled his horse. After "hitching up," we proceeded to return home, leaving the Shiretown by way of Summer Street, along Town Brook.

Having come to the steep hill where the road branches to Carver, a severe thunderstorm came up, in which marble-sized hailstones came pelting down. The horse became frightened. Father turned him around, and headed down the hill into a cart path, where branches overhung on either side, hoping they would protect the horse. In one or two instances, the hailstones drew blood on the horse's rump. He became unmanageable and we went flying down that hill, to find shelter in a "lean-to." In time we were able to proceed home without further instance.

In November of that same year, the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, we were invited to Thanksgiving dinner with cousins in New Bedford. We had a sumptuous feast and enjoyable visit with our relatives, and were invited to stay over the week end. Dad thought he should be home on Saturday, so on Friday forenoon we left the city. It developed into a very raw, penetrating cold day. It was a long twenty-two miles. Vehicles did not travel very rapidly in those days. I became very chilled. When passing through the area, which is now the entrance to Cedardale, I begged to get out and run along side of the carriage, to warm up. In due time we arrived home safely. It reminded me of Whittier's **Snow Bound** — "the chill no home spun stuff could quite keep out."

That night it began to snow and continued Saturday and Sunday, which became famous as the North East Gale of 1898, when the Portland and all its passengers were lost in Massachusetts Bay. The Hotel and Pavilion where we had picnicked in August, were destroyed. Cottages from the Beach were washed into Plymouth Town and the Beach was bare, without a building on it.

This same storm tore a great gap in the beach between 3rd and 4th Cliff in Scituate, where the North River now enters directly into the sea. It formerly wound its way through the marshes to Hummarock. It also washed out the roadway at Little's Bridge, between Greenbush and Marshfield.

Just one month after this storm, on the 28th of December, 1898, came another disaster. During my vacation week from school, I went with two other teams (I was driving a single horse hitch), carting logs from the area back of the then Shurtleff Place, adjacent to Woods Pond, to Atwood's Mill at Rock. Later the Shurtleff Place was owned by the parents of Joseph Cooper, our former Assistant Postmaster. We had made two trips to the Mill and were returning home by the Chester Weston Homestead on Sachem Street, when the thought came to me, what would I do if fire had destroyed buildings on the Homestead, while I was away. As I came to the gap in the hill, lo and behold, there was an unusual bright light, and fire, in the shed, adjoining the barn, which was used for a slaughter house.

I saw a figure leave the barn and immediately return. The teamsters and I all came to that this was a fire out of control. The others realized the situation and proceeded as fast as possible to help Father save as much as could be taken from the buildings. I conceived the idea that I could be the most service by going at once to the HOSE HOUSE on Star Mill Hill, ringing the fire alarm, and assisting with the horse and wagon to pull the hose reel to the fire hydrant, near the homestead. In my strenuous application of the cart stake to the old horse's rump, to accelerate speed, I overdid the matter. About where Mr. Judge's Paint Store now stands, the horse let his heels fly into the air, and came down breaking the shafts and some portions of his harness.

This brought to a conclusion all hopes of me becoming an assistant fireman. I did, however, extricate the horse from the wagon, jumped on his back and rode on to ring Box 27, situated then as now, on Mill Hill, in front of the Walker Co. Office. The firemen laboriously pulled by hand the 500 feet of hose, to the hydrant, and laid the line to the fire. Another line was laid by another fire company and the two streams played on the flames. The water main was four inches and the two streams amounted to a good garden hose. It was a bitterly cold and windy night. Firemen suffered frost-bitten hands and fingers. The fire had gained such headway that nothing of the building was saved. The water froze into ice all around. The hay smouldered several days and firemen had to wet it down. There was a fire district at this time. Firemen came from all the districts and worked heroically. The flames were visible for many miles. This night was outstanding, and well remembered as "the time that Pratt's barn burned." Father had a cranberry house which he used to stable his ten horses. He put the cows in a small shed. The teamsters and my father were able to save the wagons. The cows were turned loose. Two cows suffered frozen udders, and had to be slaughtered. Five pigs were suffocated under the barn.

The following Spring, 1899, Father procured a contract from the County Commissioners to build the causeway and road at Little's Bridge, Scituate, which had been washed out by the November Gale. One morning in late June our entire family left with a caravan of twelve horses, wagons, and equipment, plus one cow and a dog. It was a day's journey, through Halifax, Monponsett, Pembroke, Marshfield Hills, to Greenbush, where we established a camp on the Briggs Estate. The family lived in a tent and spent a most delightful summer, while the men built the road. The caravan returned home in late August. Father was well repaid for his efforts. We long remembered our vacation near the salt water. And so some of the calamities of 1898 were balanced by a profitable summer in 1899

NEWS AND NOSTRUMS

(Selected from The Middleborough Gazette
& Old Colony Advertiser
Vol. VIII, No. 48, for September 29, 1860)
Contributed by Susan B. Brackett

It was "A Family Newspaper, Devoted to Local and General News . . . Every Saturday Morning, R. W. Lawrence, Printer. . . . Advertisements inserted for $1.25 per square of 12 lines, for 3 insertions; one shilling per week for each subsequent insertion. Transient advertising must invariably be paid in advance: Items of news well authenticated solicited as a special favor from all the towns in Plymouth County. JOB PRINTING, executed at this office with neatness and dispatch. Orders are solicited from subscribers and the public generally."

The issue consisted of one sheet folded to make four pages which were literally packed with interesting information of various kinds and on various subjects. Local items were generally ignored on the first page, such being consigned to not much over a column on Page 2. South Carver, Bridgewater and the home town were contributors of news items. Four marriages and one death were reported, but no births. Apparently baby "explosions" were taken as a matter of course. There was some controversy as to what to name the town proper. At that time there were Waterville, Eddyville, Nemasket Village, Titicut "&c.", while the village was called Four Corners. This proved very confusing to strangers, giving the wrong impression that residents living at the "Four Corners" dwelt outside the town.

On the first page are several fascinating articles, some in poetry, others prose, and one entire column devoted to advertising.

Whoever heard of "The Freetown Hermit" and how many realize Freetown formerly embraced Fall River? Following is the article regarding the Hermit, but the contributor's name is not given.

Assonet Village, Freetown, Sept. 17, 1860.

Rev. Stillman Pratt, — Dear Sir:

Doubtless you are aware that most of my leisure moments are occupied in writing an historical and biographical sketch of the original purchasers and pioneer settlers of ancient "Freetown," which formerly embraced Fall River. Having just finished a chapter, I accidentally met at the village store this morning, my friend Mr. Edmund H. Peirce, the impromptu poet, to whom I was relating some of the peculiarities of characters discoverable in the persons described, one of whom held almost every office in town and was once voted a minister pro tem, to serve the town in that capacity until a supply was received from England, another was a soldier, "who bravely fought and nobly fell" in the sanguinary battle at Rehoboth in 1676, and last, though not least interesting, was a veritable hermit of the Robinson Crusoe stamp, (so far at least as the selection of his companions was concerned,) but a recluse from the chagrin he suffered from unrequited affection. But to the last character I frankly acknowledged the inefficiency of my plain prose to do justice, when Mr. Peirce kindly volunteered his aid and most readily produced the following:

"Here, friend, is the place where a hermit once dwelt
And ended his comfortable life;
By none but himself were his sorrows e'er felt,
For the hermit had never a wife.
In the days of his youth he experienced love's flame,
For O' with most merciless art,
Shy Cupid, in ambush, with cruelest aim
Transfixed his susceptible heart.
But the maiden he loved, of his love made a mock,
Spurned the offer to make her his bride;
So he built him a cabin beside this lone rock,
And a hermit he lived and he died.
Save his two faithful dogs, there was none to mourn
When his soul left its tenement here,
And went to its home in that heavenly bourne,
Where he knows neither sorrow nor fear."

The advertisements on Page 1 list: Sewing Machines, Melodeons, "Dr. Leach, Dental Surgeon," "House paper," "A good family Caryall for Sale by Executor (Eben. Pickens) of the Will of Cornelius S. Burgess," "Mrs. G. M. Knight, "Music," "Samuel Colby, Jr. Taunton, Clothier," and "A Card to Young Ladies and Gentlemen," from a Subscriber, James T. Marshall, who would send (free of charge) a recipe and directions for making Vegetable Balm, the application of which, in a period from two to eight days would insure them a skin, "soft, clear, smooth and beautiful."

However, on Pages 3 and 4 the vendors of nostrums for every ill known to man (or woman), internal or external, come into their own. Although other items are shown for sale, as, "A beautiful Lounge, $5.75," "Patent Apple Pearer," "Air Tight Preserving Jars," "Day and Martin's Blacking," and so forth, are shown for practical homekeepers, in the main both pages are devoted to pills, liquid potions, et cetera. Some of these are shown as follows:

"Humphrey's Homeopathic Specific Remedies for the People."
14 are listed numerically, followed by itemized descriptions of symptoms, group of "Price" and "Also Specifics."
Same may be procured my mail
. . . Drugs MEDICINES sold by J. B. and J. Shaw, PATENT MEDICINES
Special attention called to "Shaw's Anodyne Liniment.
For Relief and Cure of
Sprains, Bruises, Rheumatism, Cramps, Stiffness of the Neck or Joints, Burns, Scalds, Chillblains, Chapped Hands, Fresh Wounds, &c.
Dyspepsia Remedy Dr. Darius Ham's "Aromatic Invigorating Spirit."
This seems to have been particularly efficient for all sorts of ills, even to the relief of Delirium Tremens.
Dr. Mott's Chalybeate Restorative, Pills of Iron. These too, were a cure for everything from "Debility, Nervous Afflictions, Etc. down to Intermittent Fevers and Pimples.

Then there are "U.C.R. & T.A. "Hunnewell's Universal Cough Remedy, and Dr. M'Lane's Celebrated Vermifuge and Liver Pills. Without going into too much detail they beg the Doctors, or rather "Physicians" of the country, to put these before the public. The Vermifuge is particularly recommended having "been administered with most satisfactory results to various Animals subject to Worms." These had been so successfully sold for twenty years that the manufacturers, Fleming Brothers, of Pittsburgh, Pa., were selling out their Drug Business and were going into manufacturing these pills alone.

Then there was Mrs. Wilson's Hair Regenerator, her Cocoanut Oil Hair Dressing, and her Soothing Syrup and Ayer's Cathartic Pills. Also there were Oxygeneated Bitters by S. W. Fowle & Co., Boston, Dr. Sweet's Infallible Liniment (He was Dr. Stephen Sweet of Connecticut), and a Special Notice by him calling attention to Horse Owners for the use of his Infallible Liniment for Horses.

One cannot but wonder what would have happened to all these "Doctors" and vendors had the Food & Drug Law been in effect. Also, one cannot but wonder what effect these various concoctions had upon the purchasers who used them.

CONGRATULATIONS TO
THE NEMASKET TRIBE OF RED MEN, I. O. R. M.
ON THEIR 75th ANNIVERSARY

Members of the Nemasket Tribe, Improved Order of Red Men, recently celebrated their 75th anniversary of continuous operation.

The institutional ceremony was performed by the Pequot Tribe of Brockton, on June 26, 1889, in Old American Hall. (Faietti's Hardware Store occupies this building now.)

J. Edwards Alden (Father to Leon) was the first candidate to be initiated to membership and the following stump chiefs were raised to their respective stations: Prophet—E. P. Lebaron, Sachem—J. B. Ryder, Senior Sagamore—T. L. Ellis, Junior Sagamore—E. F. Lebaron.

The tribe leased the hall on the second floor of the Doane building, right next door, for their so-called wigwam.

A few years later the Nemasket Tribe was called on to institute the Cromesett Tribe in Wareham.

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DRY CLEANING — DYEING — TAILORING
260 Centre Street
Tel. 947-3852

Nemasket degree teams were in great demand and often special trolleys or steam trains were chartered to take them to the various towns in southeastern Massachusetts.

In 1939 the Golden Anniversary was celebrated with a large gathering at Town Hall.

The tribe continued to meet in these same quarters for 65 years until the hall and contents were destroyed by fire September 22, 1954.

Simeon Nickerson Post offered them the temporary use of their hall gratis which was graciously accepted. A building committee was formed immediately and in November of 1955 the foundation of the present hall on Everett Street was laid. The first meeting in the new wigwam was held December 4, 1956.

Nemasket Tribe has had two Great Sachems, Manuel J. Silvia and Lorenzo Haskins and many appointed Great Chiefs.

In the year 1900 an auxiliary, Waneta Council, was formed which functioned about fifteen years. In 1925 the present Assawampsett Council was instituted in the Old Peirce Academy and has continued active to the present time.

OLD MOTORCYCLISTS

By Lyman Butler

How many people today can remember when Duke Tinkham, Austin Sherman, Dummy Jones, Ben Chapman, Bert Sherman, and Paul Anderson were familiar sights around town on their respective motorcycles?

I well remember the old one cylinder, or "one-lunger," Thor Machine that Dummy Jones rode when I first knew him. This cycle was belt-driven and quite often the belt would jump the pulley. One day at North Street Ball Park, the belt came off—Dummy cussed a lot, but no one knew what he was trying to say as the only sound he made was "ugh" or "oh."

In those days Ben Chapman and Bert Sherman ran cycle shops so it was good advertising for them to ride motorcycles.

Later on I remember Buck Mahoney, Free. Shaw, Gil Broadbent, Russ Haskins, Chet Baker, Dutch Letorneau, Henry Sherman, Win Bigelow, Ray Towne, Lester and Harold Hunter, Charlie Harris, and, of course, there was Tom Pittsley, who was a motorcycle policeman for years, and I too had a couple of machines myself. There were no doubt many others but they are the ones I remember well.

In the old days cycling was a lot more difficult than today since only the main roads were black top and many of the back roads were sand or very rutty, with many a spill for the unwary.

One of the attractions of the day was the hill climb at Plymouth and many of the more experienced riders used to compete in this event. Now they have the so-called "scrambles" that draw many motorcyclists from all over New England.

The scrambles track is at the Middleboro-Carver line and is sponsored by the Capeway Rovers, a local organization.

Recalling some of the dangers of cycling in the old days, I remember that through Warrentown there was a path along the road that all bicycles and motorcycles used, as this was much smoother than the roadway. One day as I was putt-putting along on my old one-lunger Indian, a dog ran out and tried to get a feed off my leg. I tried to kick him off and lost control of the machine, which promptly turned over with me underneath. The motor turned over a few times and the chain chewed a good sized hole in my ankle before it stopped. I don't know but what it would have been better to let the dog have a small hunk of my leg. Another time some one had very inconsiderately put a good-sized stone in the path in tall grass. I didn't see it till too late and over I went but no bruises this time. About this time several companies came out with bike motors. One of the most popular was the Johnson Motor Wheel. Some of these were O. K. but I know I had one and I spent more time pedaling the durn thing to get it started than actually getting a ride on it.

ACCUMULATION, CATALOGUING AND PRESERVATION

Lawrence B. Romaine

No curator, director, chairman of various and sundry boards, custodian or librarian of any American historical institution or organization needs to have those words explained. Actually, preservation should come before cataloguing, but I chose to be alphabetical. When your institution becomes a fact, and is established and recognized, accumulation is easy. Proper preservation is a matter for all hands, and cataloguing a task for the truly dedicated.

In spite of many a tirade in the Middleborough Gazette by that museum mouse, our acquisitions over the past four years since the Town's gift of two 1820 houses have spoken well for the generosity of the ancestors of our Middleborough citizens. I repeat, accumulation is relatively easy when you have the backing of your community — proper cataloguing and preservation are two very serious problems. I hope that when we reach our tercentenary in 1969, more pseudo-historians will be more interested in cataloguing and preservation than in a big blow-up of a sort of 4th of July celebration! Who was it first said **people are funny?** A big bust is one thing, but steady, hard work is another. Do I see a host of hands in my audience?

Apropos of life and three score years and ten, we offer this time half of a very important article by Ted Eayrs, our junior archaeologist, now at Olivet College for his first year. We sincerely hope that in years to come Ted will continue his study of Middleborough's most important contribution to American industrial development during our 18th century, and eventually take over as curator. His work has been accurate and dedicated, and the OLIVER EXHIBIT a masterpiece worthy of Plymouth or Old Sturbridge Village.

Unfortunately we have 8 pages of advertising, and **only** 8 pages of text to fill. I think without exaggeration I could fill 24, — and I mean of text only! Under the circumstances I hope those contributors who have been left out will understand. A stock pile to an editor is like money in the bank.

"Way, way back in the ages dark" as the old song goes, Ebenezer Pratt, Father of Simeon M. Pratt, and great grandfather of Ernest Pratt whom we all knew, and who bought the Pratt farm built ca. 1768, kept a diary and account book. In those early days the Pratts were tanners, and hides of horses, sheep and steers ran from about two to eight pounds sterling, depending on their quality and weight. This book runs from 1771 to 1814 (far more clearly written than the average high school student of today), and includes "corring," and carding, as well as the loan of "my hors to borston," among many other chores and jobs. Incidentally, Mrs. Ernest Pratt has given us many other heirlooms not as yet catalogued, and we plan an exhibit of the Ice industry of the 19th century in Middleborough thanks to the Ernest Pratts next Summer.

(Ah me, if type setting was only still paid for in cabbages and beef, or at pence and shillings — see Susan Brackett's story — News and Nostrums - 1860 — I'd shoot this issue to 24 pages!) However, facts and 1964 prices are here to stay, and we'll do the best we can. Accumulations continue — and of course I DO know that the proper word is acquisitions, and it does sound more important I'll admit — but believe me, I'm not belittling for a minute. Mrs. Harrie Shores has given a collection of pictures and small heirlooms — it is becoming a merry-go-round and with each turn of the wheel each occupant of the many seats drops historical relics in our windows and doors! Baby clothes from Mrs. John Hurst, a fine old spool bed from Mrs. Ted Travalini, any number of tools of the early 19th century show up without identification; I talked with the museum mouse, however, and found that Lyman Butler, Everett Buckman and Mel Wilbur were responsible for additions to several exhibits, notably the blacksmith shop, cobblers shop and Peirce Store.

From the nieces and nephew of Mrs. George A. (Annie Maxim) Cowen we have just acquired (and loyal generosity is the right word here) a large collection of dresses, hats, blouses — or as Rogers Peet & Co. used to say in the 19th century catalogues: "Clothes, Overclothes, Underclothes, Hats, Shoes & All Things in Between." (1892). Far more important however are the Civil War diaries of Mrs. Cowen's Father, Charles M. Maxim, which I hope the Association will some day publish in a brochure. (If there is room, I hope to include excerpts typed by Mrs. Cowen years ago and read at a meeting of our Historical Association — if not, I promise it in a future issue.) The collection also includes medals and badges from many G.A.R. en-

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campments, not to forget even two little red, white and blue cups from one of them. There are photographs and Civil War memorabilia, other bits of manuscript, neatly tucked in a candy box with a sampler worked by Charity Bishop at age eleven in 1816. Still more important to the industrial history of Middleborough is the original patent papers for Marcus Maxim's **Improved Spike Machine,** WITH the original drawings and specifications, dated March 10, 1849. (See Middleborough Antiquarian, Vol. V, No. 1, page 7 for a story written about several of Mr. Maxim's letters given to us by Leo J. Caron.) The patent was issued to Mr. Maxim when living in Newcastle, Pennsylvania — but, if you are interested, look it up. This was the January 1963 issue; NOW we have a really good story!

Miss Ruth R. Padelford of Washington, D.C. has given us a picture of Elijah Perkins, her Father. **NOW** what in tarnation have I forgotten, AND WHO?? If I missed you, I'll guarantee it's only that my gears are slipping — they will do that you know, just like the old wooden clock works. Rest assured that any and all of your gifts to the museum are carefully stored with your name on them — somewhere.

I knew it, I knew it — here are two more I completely neglected. Last Summer Mr. and Mrs. Harold A. Hall gave us a really large collection of the products of Gunderson-Pairpoint Glass Works of New Bedford. This manufactory was originally the Mount Washington Glass Works, later taken over by the Pairpoint Company, and finally becoming known as the Gunderson-Pairpoint Company. There are vases, lamp globes and many other pieces reflecting the influence of American glass making during the 19th century. With the collection are photographs of later designs in candlesticks and tableware. The collection has not been displayed as yet, but is carefully stored until we can make the room, build the shelves and catch a couple of enthusiastic Girl Scouts with soap and water! Last but not least is a delightful brochure titled: "OLDEN TYME MUSICKE. YE GREATE CONCERTE at ye TOWNE HALL, MIDDLEBOROUGH, Wednesday Night, ye 14th Daye of ye 4th Monthe of ye Year 1875. Ye Make-up of This Book was done in ye Greate Steam Booke & Job Printinge House of Harlow & Thatcher, who doe their work over ye Machine Shop of Elisha (whose surname is Jenks) situated due East from ye Hall, in ye Towne of Middleborough." There now I'm going to run like blazes before another small wheel turns sluggishly over, and memory produces another historical heirloom.

SILVERWARE FROM THE "DANIEL B. FEARING"

A gift of silverware from the ship "Daniel B. Fearing" has recently been presented to the Museum and placed in a special display below a painting of the vessel. This schooner, out of Newport, R.I., was captained and partly owned by Capt. James C. Clifford of Middleboro. On May 6, 1896, she was on her way from Philadelphia to Boston with a cargo of coal when she was shipwrecked in a gale off Cahoon's Hollow, Cape Cod. The crew clung to the rigging until rescued by the crew of the life saving station. The ship was a total loss, but some of the silverware used on the vessel was washed up on the shore and taken home by Capt. Clifford. Each piece of the tableware is marked, "The Daniel B. Fearing, Reynolds Line, Newport, R.I." Capt. Clifford's daughter, Miss Emma O. Clifford, treasured the silverware as long as she lived, and recently Miss Ruth A. Hathaway has presented the painting of the vessel and the silverware to the Museum. Accompanying the gift was also a painting of the sister ship, the "James C. Clifford."

EXCERPTS FROM CHARLES M. MAXIM'S CIVIL WAR DIARIES — 1861 - 1865

Presented at a Meeting of the Association

By Mrs. George A. Cowen

It was October 25, 1861, that my father, Charles M. Maxim, volunteered his services to his country, joining a Plymouth Co., as he has told me, Co. E. of the 23rd Regiment M. V. I. and camping in Lynnfield. On Nov. 11, they left Lynnfield and had dinner on Boston Common. From Boston to New York, stayed in New York over night and had a good many drunken ones, Plymouth Co. largely represented — I doubt if he were one. The following day on to Philadelphia and had a first rate supper, arrived in Perryville, Md. before noon the next day and had a lunch of salt beef and hard bread — that night slept in the depot. At this place are great numbers of wild mules being broken in to the baggage wagons.

Nov. 16, got into Annapolis and cleared a place in the pine woods for our camp. We had a visit from Gen. Burnside. Nothing of special importance in the intervening days. The 24th I am on guard to-day the first time since my enlistment in the 23rd. Eleven hundred cavalry came into Annapolis last night. At present there are four Regiments of Infantry from Mass., one from N. H., one of Zouaves from N. Y., and two cavalry regiments in this place.

Dec. 5th was mustered in this forenoon. There was target shooting which is the first — some good shots — probably some pretty wild ones.

Dec. 9, We had Brigade drill for the first time. It was pretty hard work and the weather oppressive. This afternoon we had another target shoot and I for a wonder hit the board once. Each man had two cartridges.

Dec. 19. A grand review of all the forces in this place by the Gov. and Legislature of Md. One Reg. of cavalry and eleven of infantry. Dec. 25, inspection to-day by U. S. officers, they kept us standing a good while in the cold without our dinner. We are to be prepared to march at twelve hours notice.

Dec. 30, the Reg. was paid off this afternoon, one months pay this time. I received $3.53 for six days. Jan. 6, we broke camp this morning and came to Fortress Monroe and then to Hatteras Inlet—this is the most Godforsaken place—just sand banks. Baked beans for dinner—a perfect Godsend. The 18th. This is the thirteenth day we have been on shipboard and I wish we were off—the filthiest place I ever was in. I had potatoes for dinner but saw some of the boys eat raw pork. We only have half a pint of coffee a day now. Jan. 26, had tea for breakfast though they said it was a mistake but thank God for such mistakes. I begin to feel a half famished man cannot feel very patriotic. The 29th, only a pint of water with our salt junk to-day. Feb. 5, Left Hatterous Inlet this morning and came to anchor this evening. Feb. 7th, First shot fired from gunboat Hussar, a brisk cannonading is now going on, the prospect good for us. The enemies guns all silenced but one, they have behaved like heroes. The 8th. Action commenced this morning, this afternoon our flag floats on Fortress Monroe. 10th, the number of prisoners amounts to 3500. The whole island in our possession. We have captured two forts and two batteries — don't know the number killed. 23. Went to the mainland and got eight bushels of sweet potatoes that we purchased (?) from a planter. We'll live again for a few days.

27th. Lieut. Atwood bought a barrel of apples for $10. and sells them for 5 cts. apiece.

Mar. 1. Two cases of mumps in our Co. to-day, and I am expecting to have mumps soon. Pa feared them all through his ninety years. Peach brandy rather plentyful with some of the boys last night. 6th. Left the mouth of the big Alligator river and went ashore all armed for the enemy but met none. The officers bought a few chickens while some of us borrowed a few more. Reported fight between the Merrimac and our frigates. 13th. Left the Hussar and landed without being fired upon. During our march we passed an immense earthwork of the enemy which had not been prepared for us as we came a little too soon. We did not camp until after dark and had a hard time marching in the mud. Started next morning when in a short distance a most raking fire was poured into us from a battery we could not see. The Reg. was thrown into confusion but rallied and did good service and later the fortifications were in our possession. When we came in sight of Newbern it appeared to be in a sheet of flames. May 28. Our Co. on special guard over Gen. Burnside. Had a good time playing the fiddle this afternoon — the first time since leaving home. Received news of the repulse of Gen. Banks and his retreat to Harper's Ferry. It is reported the rebel Jackson has been defeated by McDowell and Shields. 28th. Went in company of two others to the battle ground of the 14th of March; everything bore witness of the terrible conflict, there being hardly a tree not marked by the deadly missiles. July 3. It is currently reported to-day that Richmond is taken. 4th. No passes required by any one. Salutes fired at noon and sunset. Quite a display of flags in the city. Apples, pears and plums brought in for sale but our money is all gone. No one but traders permitted to communicate with the citizens unless in presence of a guard — too many spies. 26th. Battalion was formed this A.M. and marched to the Sq. per order of Gen. Foster where they tore down and thoroughly demolished a large part of the buildings owned and occupied by the Secesh. Aug. 10. Thermometer from 103 to 106 in the shade. About 50 contrabands mostly women and children came in to-day in charge of an old veteran. Nearly 100 from the 23rd Reg. detailed to put up tents for the negroes. 16. On guard at the hospital to-day — could have had the day off had it not been for the shirkers playing sick. 17th. I am twenty years old to-day. Expected to have some currant jelly from home but the bottle broke and contents pretty well soaked up in a shirt mother had sent me but I did get a few spice sweeting apples that were very good. Sept. 2nd. Got picked up and carried to the marshal's office by a guard this morning as my pass by mistake was dated wrong. Sept. 3rd. Off guard to-day — something strange. It is reported Stonewall Jackson has been handled roughly by our Generals in Va. A body of 1400 rebels made an attack on Washington, N.C. but were repulsed with severe loss leaving thirty of their number dead in the street. Our loss 40 killed and we took thirty prisoners. It was the most desperate hand to hand fight we have had in the war so far. It is said the 1st North Carolina Reg. (Union) fought like tigers. The Carver Co. in the 18th Mas. was badly cut up in one of the late battles — quite a number killed. Reg. lost over 150 in all.

19th. Excused from duty by the doctor — a good many sick in the Co. at present. Sept. 21. It is reported that one of the Reg. shot his thumb off by design to get a discharge by so doing. 22nd. News this evening of the capture of Harper's Ferry and a large body of our troops by the rebels. 23rd. News to-day the enemy has been driven out of Maryland by McClennan. Two of Co. E for some misconduct lose all their pay and to be sent to Fort Macon until term of enlistment expires, another to stay 15 months to receive $5. per month, and another to wear a 20 lb. ball and chain, four months at Fort Macon, to receive $3. per month.

Was appointed Corporal in the Co. — expect to have it a little easier now. Had oyster soup for supper. Oct. 7th. Made my first appearance with chevrons to-day. Don't feel quite so independent as I did before having them on but mean to do as well as I can. Some trouble in trying to make one of the Co. wear a barrel with a hole in the head as a punishment. Had fried potatoes for supper.

Nov. 12. Five Cos. of our regiment left the city and marched as far as Bachelder's Creek. Nothing to eat but hard bread and raw pork. Concert this evening couldn't go myself hadn't the tin to spare.

Had fresh meat soup for Thanksgiving dinner. Men have liberty to discharge firearms as much as they like to-day. A battle at White Hall on the 16th the 23rd held its position for two hours under a deadly fire from the enemy who were behind logs and houses — our men lying on the ground with the artillery firing over them. Our Reg. lost 63 killed and wounded. The 18th, another battle at Everettville with heavy losses for the enemy — killed and wounded lying in windrows. Our loss not large. Started for Newbern the 20th having marched 150 miles.

Jan. 3, 1863. Promoted to Sergeant in the Co. to-day. Struck tents and started for Morehead city. On the 20th embarked on the Moreton — a fine ship and much better than the quarters on the Hussar last winter. Upward of fifty vessels containing the 1st Division went to sea to-day, passed the stockade squadron off Charleston. Everything quiet on the Island. We went into camp on St. Helena Is. Capt. Church of Rochester is here. April 1863. Reported our fleet has passed the Inner Bar at Charleston, also that Vicksburg has been taken. The attack on Charleston commenced. The walls of Sumpter said to be badly injured by our Ironclads. Was shot at last night while on picket by one of our Cavalry returning with dispatches. Over three shots were fired causing a general alarm, he taking us to be Guerillas. No one hurt. News of a great victory by Gen. Meade at Gettysburg, Pa. We have the official account of the surrender of Vicksburg to Gen. Grant with 18,000 prisoners. Reveille at three this morning starting for Newport Barracks, later to Swansboro. Very hot marching, roads very muddy. The boys found a few melons and vegetables. Have been sick with fever and ague to-day.

Orders are to be ready to go on another expedition — every man that can carry a gun. Enough straw hats for the whole Reg. arrived to-day from Foxboro, Mass. They are trimmed with blue ribbon with number of Reg. on the band. Aug. 17. I am twenty-one to-day. Heard our forces had battered down one corner of Fort Sumpter, later captured it and Wagner. Much illness among the boys — chills and fever. Sept. 21. Sailed for N. Y. this morning, arrived home the 25th and found everything very natural. Have picked a few cranberries and went gunning and got one partridge.

Started back Oct. 10 — felt worse to leave home than the first time. An old apple woman in N. Y. said she would cheat anyone before she would a soldier. Back in Newbern. Nearly all the troops have gone to Va. Oct. 29th. Arrived in Hampton Roads this morning. Got to the Reg. at Newport News. A review of all the troops at this place. Our Reg. marched very well. Gen. Butler assumes command in this Dept. He is severe on all disloyal persons who try to injure the loyal. Thanksgiving '63. Had roast turkey for dinner. There was horse, foot and sack racing after the greased pig all by the 3rd N. Y. Cavalry. After the sports a dispatch was read that Gen. Bragg was defeated in Tenn. with the loss of 105 pieces of artillery and 5,000 prisoners. Later stated that 40 cannons were captured from the enemy.

Feb. At Gettysville Station after a furlough. Hear our Reg. is fined $2,000. for damage done by the boys between Jersey City and Baltimore. Mar. '64. Had orders to march at one half hour's notice. 30,000 rebels are at Blackwater. Reported the enemy occupy Suffolk with force of 2000 infantry, 500 Cavalry, six pcs. of artillery. Cos. G and E ordered out to support the Wisconsin Battery. Our Reg. and Wisconsin Battery fell back. Some of our Cavalry went into Suffolk. Our Reg. cut off by the enemy near Suffolk having to cut their way out losing 30 men and one brass Howitzer. April, 1864. There is now a force of 60,000 at Yorktown and our Reg. is moving there encamping by the river. Pres. Lincoln in Yorktown. Embarked down the river, anchored at Hampton Roads. Later started up the James, passed ruins of Jamestown, four Ironclads came up with us. Our Reg. the first to land, starting for Petersburg. They attacked the enemy and were driven back with heavy losses—could not get our dead off the field. It is reported 25,000 men from Lee's army are threatening our right. Our forces have captured 4000 of the enemy above here. Our loss in the battle of Drury's Bluff is said to be 5000. June. This place is called Coal Harbor — every day fighting. The 19th reported that Petersburg is in our possession with from 12 to 15,000 prisoners. Story doubted. Part of our 100 day's men refused duty but at the sight of a squadron of Cavalry with drawn sabres they were brought to terms. Cabbage soup for dinner to-day. News is confirmed — Atlanta, Ga. is in our possession. Aug. 17. I am twenty-two years old to-day making the third birthday in the army. Had a feast of watermelon. By the cheering old whiskey is quite plentyful. Savannah has been taken by Sherman. Some cases of yellow fever in Newbern. Sept. Sailed for Newbern and so ends our Co. in Virginia. Tar barrels are being burned every day on account of the fever. Oct. 25th. Just three years ago to-day I left home to enlist in Co. E, 23rd M. V. I. Have had some narrow escapes but never wounded, skin broken at Coal Harbor when struck by a bullet. Still more history but my father stayed through till the end of the war in 65.

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THE IRON MANUFACTURE AT JUDGE OLIVER'S WORKS

Part III

This is the second part of Ted Eayrs' "An Archaeological Survey of Judge Oliver's Ironworks," continued from Vol. VI, #4. We are sorry that it was not possible to provide a cut from which you could actually read Judge Oliver's letter to the Honorable Stephen A. Hopkins, Governor of Rhode Island, (page 2), and also, if you really want to read it, see the Antiquarian Vol. VI, #1 — "The case of the Gun Carriage Wheels." — I'd like to echo MJH (Martha J. Howard) and suggest that interested Middleboroughites take a look at the old site and try to imagine a proper restoration in the near future.

The industry at Judge Oliver's Works involved three distinct processes: smelting, blooming, and rolling and slitting. The finds in this area have been limited due to the ravages of nature. However, the iron process at this time was widely known and thus has been incorporated into many books.[28] Therefore this part of the excavations is based largely on research.

The blast furnace of Judge Oliver's Works, responsible for much of the history of the site, has been, archaeologically speaking, evasive. Weston[29] cites the furnace as being located down stream from the dam at a point extending into the river. This, although possible, does not seem probable for several reasons. First and foremost is the matter of drainage. If located on a spot in the middle of the river, the furnace would be subject to constant flooding in the spring, thus making iron production impossible. Also, no remains of the furnace were found as a result of spot digging. In opposition to this theory it is entirely possible that the furnace remains were used to build the new shovel works in 1794. Another possibility not yet completely explored is the hill directly opposite the ironworks site. Recent digging has disclosed the presence of charcoal deposits on the hillside and a square mound at the base of the hill. Aside from being unnatural to the surroundings, it resembles exactly the ruins of the Saugus blast furnace in Lynn.[30] It should be here interjected that this area has not been excavated thoroughly at present. The results of further digging will validate or reject this proposal.

The smelting of ore, done at the blast furnace, required three materials: charcoal, iron ore and limestone. These materials were gathered and brought to the furnace where they were processed into cast iron.

Charcoal was employed as the primary fuel. Although deposits of coal were available, this product was of a quality too inferior to warrant its successful usage.[31] Oak logs were gathered in the forests of Middleborough. They were placed in a large circle, about 30 feet in diameter, covered with sod, and burned by a destructive distillation process. The charcoal was then harvested and carried to the furnace where it was sold.

The iron was undoubtedly the most important of blast furnace items. The iron in the form of ore used at Judge Oliver's works, came from several sources. The most of it came from lake bottoms in the form of Limonite.[32] This yellow-brown ore was either raked from lake bottoms or shoveled from swamps. The average worker procured up to one ton a day. It is estimated that 500 tons of ore were drawn per year from lake Assawampsett alone. The extraction of ore became so widespread that in 1747 a committee of three men was appointed by the town to see that the drawing of ore was done to the town's benefit.[33] The only fault of the Limonite ore was its impurity. Oliver, who engaged in the production of heavy ordinance such as cannon, howitzers and shot and shell, could not use impure ore for this purpose. It it was used, the chances were good that the first shot fired would blow the cannon to pieces. To prevent such a misfortune, Oliver sent to New Jersey for "mountain ore" which was of much higher purity. [34] This ore was landed at Rochester wharf and brought to Middleborough. (Even in early days, trading was important to New England. Ed.)

The third ingredient was limestone flux. A fluxing agent effected the cohesion of the impurities making them melt at a lower temperature. Since limestone was not available, sea shells were used extensively.[35]

The blast furnace was filled or charged with alternate layers of these materials. It is estimated that 1¾ ton of iron ore, ¾ ton of charcoal, and ¼ ton of limestone produced 1 ton of iron.[36] Furnaces produced from one to six tons a day. When the furnace was first lighted, it was filled with more charcoal than usual. The very bottom was filled with wood to start the charcoal burning. Once lighted, it was kept going constantly day and night until the furnace wore out. The furnace was about twenty feet high and ten feet wide at the base. At the bottom of the furnace and to the right of the casting room, two bellows forced air into the crucible in the center of the furnace. A blast of air caused the charcoal to burn and form carbon dioxide. The carbon dioxide was then reduced to carbon monoxide which reduced the iron ore to iron. As the iron was set free, it trickled to the bottom of the crucible and formed a pool of molten iron with a temperature of 2,800°.[37] The impurities, called slag, also collected at the bottom but above the iron. Every hour molten slag was drawn off. Most of this quantity was discarded but some was cast into squares and used for construction blocks.[38] When a sufficient quantity of iron had accumulated, it was tapped from the furnace by breaking a clay seal. The white-hot metal ran from the furnace into a bed of casting sand where moulds had been prepared. This method reminded many of a sow with her piglets; hence the name pig iron. This iron was granular in texture. Although used widely for its wearing abilities it was extremely brittle. The iron was also ladled from the crucible and poured into small moulds. In this way pots and pans as well as many other household items were produced.

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However, Oliver's main concern was with heavy ordinance such as cannon. There is an interesting process involved in the manufacture of these weapons.[39] A long wooden pole was suspended between two wooden posts. The pole was then carefully wrapped with rope. A model cannon was then produced around the rope in clay. Inscriptions were placed on in wooden patterns. The mould was then allowed to dry and sprinkled with a powder. A second layer of clay was applied and the whole mould was baked. After baking the mould was split and the dummy withdrawn. The mould was then placed vertically in the casting sand and cast. The solid cannon was then taken to a separate building where it was bored by a large wooden drill with steel cutters. The boring completed, it was mounted and test fired twice. If it did not explode, it was considered suitable for the King's Army. (Although this is pretty technical for most folks I'm sure some old time blacksmith would love it.)

Whenever two industries are present on one site at different periods, the more recent will devastate the remains of the former. Such was the case with the forge. The site of Oliver's Forge can be readily determined but anything beyond that is impossible. As near as can be determined, the site of the forge was converted into a flood-control center for the Shovel industry. The entire area has been reduced to virtual swamp. Two small sluiceways ran under the dam directly into the foundation. A large mound of slag still exists which probably served as a retaining wall for high water.

The "pigs" from the blast furnace were brought to the forge where they were re-melted once again but this time in the presence of a molten sand. The molten mass was withdrawn in the shape of a large ball. This ball, called a "muck bar" was then hammered under a large hammer. The end product was a long piece of "wrought" iron called a "bloom." The forge, or "bloomery," was actually little more than a blacksmith shop. However, the iron produced was quite different from the blast furnace iron. The forge's "wrought iron" was not hard and brittle but soft and malleable. It would not fracture so easily and thus was useful. Its texture was not granular but grainy, like a piece of wood. This effect was the result of the silicate slag forming threads in the iron. It is estimated that a square inch of wrought iron contains 250,000 threads of iron silicate.

The site of the slitting-mill, at present reduced to an island, revealed many interesting finds. Although greatly eroded over the years, sufficient evidence remained to justify the existence of such a mill and the process carried on there. At the rear of the island a large stone platform was uncovered. It extends far under the surface of the water, and about 9 feet above. On its top several rows of bricks were found plastered to a stone base. This structure served as the foundation for the slitting-mill furnace. About this the products of the mill were found. Many a split and deformed iron "flat" revealed the difficulties in rolling iron. At the head of the island a large cache of nail-rods were found. These rusty fragments were almost completely oxidized.

In the rolling and slitting mill, wrought iron blooms were heated in a furnace until they reached a red heat. When the iron was prescribed to be at the exact same temperature inside as out, it was taken from the furnace and run between two rolls which reduced the iron from .05 to .50% depending upon the solubility and malleability of the iron. The tension suffered by the iron was so great that often the iron split. After each reduction the upper roll could be lowered so any required thickness could be made. The end product of this process was called a flat (6′ x 3″ x ¼″). These were used for blacksmithing purposes and early tool manufacture. The flats were then reheated and this time sliced between two sets of steel disks. These rods, commonly referred to as nailrods, were usually forged into nails. This was the sole means of producing nails until the invention of the nail machine.

The success or failure of any association resides in its business policies. Although no precise account has been found to date, fragments discovered in various accounts lend an accurate story of the business policies of Judge Oliver's Works. At the head of this model corporation would have been the Judge himself. He was, in a modern sense, the "chairman of the board." Under him were the various stock holders. These persons would receive the dividends of the affluent iron industry. The average profit per annum would probably exceed $20,000. Shares, although limited, could be purchased and it was quite common to sub-divide shares.

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> June 12, 1745, from James Bowdoin, with J. Gridley, 4½ sixteenth parts of a slitting mill, of a forge, and of a grist mill standing on a dam erected across the Namasket River in Middleborough . . . .[40]

There are strong possibilities that the various buildings were built separately and with different funds. The one man to whom the furnace was intrusted was called the "skipper." To him fell the responsibility of selecting and training employees, finding market places for the products, and the procuration of materials.

Judge Oliver's Works employed about 25 men. These skilled craftsmen were paid highly for their work. It is hard to stress the danger involved in iron founding. Moisture explosions were frequent and many workmen were burned by the scalding metal. Other helpers were hired but only on a part-time basis. Foundry men were paid 67c a ton for casting pigs and upwards to $5.33 for castings. The foremen of the various operations received $25. per month in addition to their casting profits. Even up to 1799, the English pound, shilling, and six pence system was used.

The sales and marketing of the various products were supervised by the Judge and carried out by clerks. He kept the records of production, arranged for markets, and collected from over-due creditors. This last task was illustrated by a letter written to Hon. Stephen A. Hopkins, Governor of Rhode Island. In it he asks the governor to look into a matter concerning certain carriage wheels manufactured by Oliver for the state. As written it seems that a contracted price was refused after the wheels were made. Thus Oliver wishes the governor to intercede for him.

Materials were procured in an interesting manner. The Works would pay farmers, or other citizens who had time, to gather materials and bring them to the furnace. This served as

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a convenient way to make extra money during slow seasons. The workers were paid in quantity (so many shillings per basket). Coal, limestone and ore were obtained exclusively in this manner; however, as early as 1756, iron ore was imported from New Jersey. The costs of operation over a six month period are interesting to note.[41]

2130 cords of wood making 1420 loads of charcoal at $2.50 a load	$3550.00
726 ton of ore at 65c per load	$4356.00
2 sets of stone for the hearth	$ 153.00
wages for founder at $11. per ton	$ 360.00
wages for other workmen	$2331.32
	$10750.32

It has been implied that Oliver was engaged in the production of military items. There is reason to believe that Oliver concentrated his production at this level. Being a Judge and in good standing with the king, the Honorable Committee of War would without question consider him an ideal source for military stores. Oliver would, to be sure, turn out only the finest of ordinance for His Majesty the King. This background gave him almost exclusive rights to Crown Contracts sent to New England. Aside from the great wealth he gathered, he was also given privileges in regard to further production. A notable example was the Navigation Acts of 1750. These acts contained a section which forbade the production of iron into anything but pigs. This was done in effort to help the failing iron industry of England. From this time on pigs would be shipped to England, processed into a useable product and reshipped to America where they were sold for twice the price.[42] In accordance with this act most iron industries ceased production, but Oliver kept on. He, through his military work, was given permission to keep on manufacturing.

(Ed's note: M.J.H. Not many high school boys can lay claim to such a painstaking piece of work. Teddy should be congratulated on his long and difficult project. I hope this report, lengthy as it is, will fire up some people to go to the museum and especially see the Judge Oliver's Works exhibit on the second floor in the first building.)

We have just lost a great leader and a friend — Mrs. Horace K. Atkins. She will be remembered and missed by the entire community, but especially by our Historical Association and our Museum.

VERMONT MUSEUMS

By Lyman Butler

Another year has rolled around (Boy they go quick) since our last visit to Cabot, Vermont. At that time I told of the visit to some of the museums in the vicinity, especially the Kent Museum at Calais.

I will mention a few more that are well worth visiting if you are in the vicinity. There is the Walker Museum at Fairlee on Route 5, which is not too large but has a little of everything old. There is a small hunting museum at the Bird and Animal Farm in the same town.

We spent a long time at the Fairbanks Museum at St. Johnsbury, Vt. Although this is advertised as a museum of Science it is that and much more. There are three floors and a planetarium. The first floor is where all the scientific machines, etc., are; the second floor is comprised of stuffed animals, birds and mammals, etc.; while the top floor has collections of old things from all over the world as well as our own country and State of Vermont.

There are some beautiful old Japanese pottery pieces, Chinese carvings, scarabs from Egypt, and spices and nuts from all over the world. A fine collection of old commemorative and presidential badges.

A collection of children's books from 1800. Others from 1607, China ware from the Lenon China Co., Trenton, N.J. Old boat models, etc.

The part that interested me most was the miniature furniture and toys. It made me think of our own Eve Lynn collection. There are many fine matched sets of furniture and dishes, etc., but ours has a much wider variety. They have a large collection of Old Coins and paper money. I could tell much more but I know the editor will cut it so will just say if you get up to St. Johnsbury go see for yourself. (He don't often wanta, but hasta!)

We paid another visit to the Kent Museum and found many new acquisitions. We learned here that there was more of the Harold Rugg collections at the Montpelier Museum at the State House, so we made a trip there. There were many rare collections of glassware, dishes, silverware, etc.; a very fine museum if you ever get a chance to visit it.

As far as the museum in Cabot goes, they have the room completed and are getting things together but are not opened as yet.

A LETTER FROM DEBORAH SAMPSON

The following letter was taken from a copy (dated March 26, 1888) of an original letter written May 12, 1778, to a Mrs. Thatcher of Middleborough by Deborah Sampson, famous for having fought several years in the Revolutionary War. This letter was taken from papers belonging to the Blandin family and given to Frank Furlan of Lakeville by Charles Lincoln of Taunton, and later to our former Associate Editor, RST., who has kindly copied it and sent it to the Antiquarian. To the best of my knowledge it has not been previously printed, for the record, so to speak. The reference to Daniel Boone in 1778, "seeking to take up some land in Kentucky country" makes this letter more than a local Massachusetts record.

"Norton May 12, 1778

"Respected and dear friend

"Fearing lest my long absence causes you anxiety, I thought good to write and inform you somewhat of my plans. Confident at least of your sympathy in the step I have taken, I shall now disclose to you my secret, too precious for the ears of any but an honored friend.

"My feelings towards this direful war are well known to you; since the first call from Lexington, I have longed to be of some actual service to the country which I love. Let me assure

---

[28] The account which, by far, I found the best is in **Diderot's Encyclopedia** published in 1756. Although in the French, it is plain, clear-cut, and accurate.

[29] Weston, **op. cit.**, p. 360.

[30] Roland Wells Robbins, **Hidden America**, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959, p. 44.

[31] It was unable to produce the high temperature necessary for iron reduction.

[32] The purity of Limonite ranged from 40 to 50%.

[33] Weston, **op. cit.**, p. 463.

[34] Magnetite ore was sometimes 99% pure.

[35] This is based on information uncovered in the Stillwater furnace ledger book.

[36] "Iron," **World Book Encyclopedia**, volume 9, page 349.

[37] **World Book Encyclopedia**, volume 9, p. 350.

[38] Several houses have reported the presence of slag either supporting fireplaces or as foundation material.

[39] This account was taken from **Diderot's Encyclopedia.** These volumes contain diagrams of the same process which here has been abbreviated.

[40] Weston, **op. cit.**, p. 384.

[41] Horace Greeley, **Great Industries of the United States,** page 360.

[42] Muzzy, David Saville. **Our Countries History.** Boston: Ginn and Company, 1961, p. 36.

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you that it was with this feeling and this only that impelled me to leave Middleboro and enlist as Robert Shirtliffe, a soldier of the Continental Army.

Methinks it would be difficult for you to recognize the tall soldier with his firelock and powderhorn as little Deborah whom you so kindly taught to spin. I am now on the way to Worcester and it may not be unpleasant to you, if I relate the occurances of the past few days. Thursday night found me about a mile and a half from the village of Taunton and as darkness began to gather I made my way to a small house, which proved to be the home of Abraham Lincoln a worthy miller on the Canoe River. Mr. Lincoln and his family are true patriots. The settle as Mrs. Lincoln showed me was filled with supplies of clothing, which she had woven and made for the soldiers. I was especially effected by the story which Mrs. Lincoln told me of her eldest son Abraham, who has gone to Rockingham, Virginia. In a recent letter he said that he intended to go soon with Mr. Daniel Boone to take up some land in Kentucky country.

"On leaving Mr. Lincoln's I took the Bay Road to the southeastern part of Norton, Winnecounnet as it is called. A name given by the Indians to the large pond there, since wild geese were very numerous along the shore. There is now a little settlement near the pond. At the home of Mr. James Wetherly I spent the night.

"Mr. Wetherly is the great-grandson of William Wetherly the first white settler in Norton. This old Mr. Wetherly, years ago, (built a) kind of ordinary house for the accomodation of such persons as might journey between Taunton and Boston.

"From Winnecunnet I made my way to the central part of the town with the purpose of tarrying over the Sabbath. The latter part of the way there was only a foot path through the woods. Ten miles of river I crossed with some difficulty by means of a log which had been thrown across the stream.

"Norton is an active, orderly, little town; numbers of men have already gone from here to the war, and another company is to start soon. The women are busy weaving, knitting, and sewing for the soldiers. At the town meeting held yesterday, it was voted that the town should raise the number of men called for, even if she had herself to pay an overplus of the thirty pounds allowed by the General Court.

"The Sabbath I spent quietly and decently with Dr. Tiffany who lives near the meeting house in the old parsonage, a fine large house though now somewhat out of repair. Nearby are the remains of a deer park, in which its former owner, Rev. Avery took great delight.

"The house devoted to the public worship of God is a goodly building with a bellcony over the door and the whole surrounded by a row of stately elms. Sunday morning as we went up the path to the meeting house, Judge Leonard alighted from his horse, and giving it to the care of a negro attendant, joined our party. Mr. Leonard invited me into the house with him, and gave me a seat in his pew next to the pulpit; a special honor, of course. The people of Norton must, I judge, be well-to-do.

"Among the gentry in the pews, I saw not a few velvets and silks; while among the common people who were seated in the galleries or on the benches in the centre of the room, the men and women were separated by a wide aisle, even calicoes and brodcloths. For all the hard times silver cannot be very scarse here, one gentlemen whom I saw had melted nine silver dollars into his knee buckles. Mr. Leonard gave me a hearty invitation to visit him the following day; this I was glad to do as I learned that the Leonards are a family of rank, being descended directly from some of the Dukes in England and among the largest land owners in New England.

"The mansion and grounds are sumptuous. Back of the house is a fine park of deer, while only a short distance away is the old bloomery the first to be set in town. The family as I judge, live much in the style of the English nobility. The judge was dressed in a coat of brown broadcloth with ruffles nearly a quarter yard deep. His most worthy consort, Experience, looked very gentle in a garb of brocaded satin with diamond pins. Miss Teddy the Judges daughter was tastefully arrayed in a light red silk, a white kerchief fastened with a gold pin, and gold beads around her neck. A young Harvard graduate, Mr. Wheaton, who is on a visit to his native town was also present. Mr. Wheaton spoke of his intentions of coming to Norton in the near future to settle. He may have more than one object in view. I know . . . Miss Teddy is certainly a comely and modest young woman. I conversed at length with Judge Leonard about the state of affairs. He observed that the news of the glorious treaty that had arrived from France on May 2nd had caused unbounded joy and fresh courage throughout the country. While he deplored the calamities of Valley Forge, he looked with encouragement on the arrival of the accomplished Baron Steuben. Mr. Leonard is evidently hopeful that liberty and peace are not far from the colonies.

"This letter I shall leave here in Norton, at the house of Mr. Samuel Lane where the post rider will call on his next visit to the town.

"Hoping that it may find you in the full enjoyment of your health: I remain your true soldier friend.

"Robert Shirtleff or
Deborah Sampson"

LITTLE SCRAPS OF PAPER

L.B.R.

Leo J. Caron of Carver has just given the museum a small piece of rag paper measuring 6 x 9½ inches, and well covered on both sides with the familiar writing of Isaac Backus. At the top of one page, unquestionably in his hand, is the date 1744. The comments on the persecution of the "Newlights," and the familiar struggle for equal rights with other citizens is surely 1744. This little fragment will be framed properly so that it can be seen and studied in the museum library.

On the margin in another hand with much more modern ink is written: "A leaf from Backus history of the Baptists written by Isaac Backus in 1744." On another margin in pencil we find: "A leaf from the manuscripts of Backus History of the Baptists." Does this little scrap of paper change what we call historical facts? Did Isaac Backus (born 1724, died 1806) really start his monumental work "A History of New England, with Particular Reference to the Denomination of Christians Called Baptists" at the tender age of twenty years? This three volume history was published over a period of nineteen years; volume one in 1777, volume two in 1784 and volume three in 1796. The writer of the marginal note supposed the date 1744 to be the date of the actual compilation of the history. He also deduced that this scrap of paper had been taken from the complete manuscript when finished in 1777. It seems more reasonable that this represents notes started at a later date although it isn't known when he really did start the history. As long as someone doesn't jump to conclusions, it is a nice little bit of manuscript history. However, if some student uses it improperly, we might suddenly find a story claiming that Isaac Backus at the tender age of twenty compiled the great history of 1777, 1784 and 1796!

I have always wondered where the compilers of the Dictionary of American Biography found the date 1774 as the year when Judge Peter Oliver moved to Middleborough. It is possible that this could be a typographical error. Judge Oliver moved to Middleborough in 1747, and by 1774, on the eve of the American Revolution, had already established one of New England's greatest manufacturing centers. Did one of the compilers see a small piece of manuscript or a letter that was misdated? Did someone misread a date? I suppose in deference to one of our greatest reference works we had best consider this error a misprint that a proofreader missed. However, it is food for thought, and serves as a reminder to coming generations: be careful how you interpret **little scraps of paper.**

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THE STORY OF BLIND PATIENCE

by

Susan B. Brackett

In the List of Registered Voters of our Town of Middleborough it is interesting to note names of streets. We can almost follow the growth of the town historically. Even names like Oak, Cedar, Pine, Maple, Locust, Ash and Spruce have significance as in the long ago certain areas were more or less covered with timber of this sort. Then there are Forest and Grove encompassing areas of woodland. Some streets bear names of individuals, as Reland, Everett, Isaac, and even Clara and Corinne. We also have Titticut and Nemasket, of Indian origin.

Other names represent old families whose members lived in homes, one after another, on these streets. We have Bourne, Crowell, Lovell, Lincoln, Peirce, Soule, Thompson, Fuller, Wood, Wilder, Carver, Miller, Smith and Benson. There were individuals among these families about whom interesting stories can be written and among them is the Family of Andrew Benson and his wife, Patience Cobb. They resided on Benson Street which is a short cut between Highland and Spruce Streets, in a house which stood just beyond, toward So. Middleboro, where Ernest Piper now lives.

Mr. Benson was a farmer and the father of eight children, whose names according to Middleboro Town Records were as follows: Andrew (died young), Linus, Caleb, Priscilla Tinkham, Calvin, Sarah Cushman, Andrew and Patience Cobb, the latter being named by Mr. Benson for her mother.

Of these eight children four were born blind while four were blest with good eyesight. We wonder if the father ever thought of the many years which little Patience was to exemplify the virtue of her name.

When little Patience was five years old her father died, but the mother, by perseverence and hard work, was enabled to keep the farm. The older children could help her and little Patience very much wished to do her share. Her older brothers and sisters taught her to pile wood. It took a lot of it in those days of open fires to warm the rooms, for stoves then had rarely been heard of, but she soon learned to bring in the sticks and pile them properly by the fireplace.

She was still anxious to be of more help and asked her mother to teach her to knit. Her mother denied this first request being so busy and also feeling it would be hard for little Patience to master the art; but the second time, the mother took some yarn and started a bit of knitting. Then she took this with two needles, came behind the little girl and stooping down, took the child's hands in hers. She made the little hands take up the work just right, push the right hand needle through a stitch in the left one, then put over the thread and slip off the stitch, and then another, the same way.

Then the mother dropped the little hands and said, "Now Patience, try if you can do it alone." The little girl being so eager to learn, had paid attention, tried it and actually knit a stitch. She was so pleased and proud. Her mother, in her wisdom and love for her little daughter, told her not to expect too much. All the wonderful anticipations the child had were not realized, but she did earn many dollars by knitting. She learned to sew. She could sew "over and over." This was hard because she couldn't always tell whether she was sewing both edges and inquired if there was not some other way. Someone taught her to "run a seam." She always tied her own knots at the end of the thread.

The little girl did not work all the time and she had a beautiful way of entertaining herself and others too. She, her sister Roxie, also blind, as were her two brothers, Calvin and Caleb, were the four who could sing, and she and Roxie, who was ten years the elder, would sit in the barn and sing by the hour.

They could go all over the house and farm, and to the neighbors, alone. These four were never lonely and scarcely realized their lack of eyesight with its deprivation. In after years Miss Patience, referring to her childhood, said, "We were as happy as any children."

Her oldest brother, Caleb, who was a Baptist minister, even when Patience was a little girl, was so fine a musician that he sometimes taught singing school. Her brother, Calvin, also blind, and also lame, was something of a poet.

There are amusing anecdotes related of the Rev. Caleb. He could walk miles and not miss his way. On one occasion a certain young man thought he was leading the Rev. Caleb and tried to lead him into a brook where there was a watering place for horses. The Rev. Caleb knew very well he was being lead astray and kept a stride behind his guide, until the latter stopped, right at the edge of the brook, where-upon he quickly slipped his hand from his leader's arm, gave him a little push in the back which sent his guide face downward into the water, from which he emerged a wetter, if not a wiser man. In the meantime Rev. Mr. Benson had turned about and walked safely over the bridge.

So retentive was Rev. Benson's mind that he could repeat whole chapters from the Bible, the hymns for singing and gave out his text, book, chapter and verse as well as anyone.

When our Patience was eighteen a great trial came to her. Her blind brother, Calvin, died when she was small, too young to remember him much. At this time, when she was eighteen, her dear sister, Roxie, died. Her brother, Caleb, being so much older, had never been at home much since she could remember. Thus, being the only blind member of the family left, she felt quite alone.

She was a serious child and early became a member of the Baptist Church which she attended faithfully and in her younger years her voice was often heard in the songs of praise.

A little over a year was spent at Perkin's Institute for the Blind at Boston. She would have remained longer but for the unfortunate accident of a fall which caused a sprained wrist. Later she attended District School where a kind teacher helped her to learn to read. Still later a Rev. Mr. Marsh helped her with a New Testament with raised letters. This she used to take to bed and by keeping her hands under the covers so they would be warm she could read a chapter and then go to sleep. She had this book until 1875 when she was parted from it awhile and then could not read it due to letters being pressed down. Still later friends read to her.

This writer, who remembers Miss Benson, is the possessor of one of her books in Braille. Her name is written therein. It is entitled, "the dairyman's daughter; an authentic narrative by the Rev. Leigh Richmond. Printed by the New England Institution for the Education of the Blind for the American Tract Society. 1835."

Miss Benson, as an old lady, had the sweetest expression. Her face intrigued me as a little girl. Having been told Miss Patience was blind and never had and never would be able to see, it was awe-inspiring for a child to try to understand that it was compassion that filled the heart to overflowing.

We cannot but feel that God, in his wisdom, recompensed the blind members of this Benson family by granting them the gift of music, both vocal and instrumental.

Patience C. Benson spent her last years at the Wales Home in Brockton. She died in 1901 and her grave, in the "Old Cemetery" at Rock, is marked with the simple inscription:

Patience C. Benson
1812-1901
Gone Home.

RETURN TRIP UP MAIN STREET

Contributed by Mertie E. Witbeck

In the Antiquarian, issue of Vol. V, #4, we reprinted an article by James A. Burgess which appeared in the Middleboro Gazette, January 22, 1909. The article was titled, "A Trip Down Main Street." In the Gazette of February 26, 1909, appeared a companion article, a trip up the opposite side of Main Street, which is presented herewith. Mr. Burgess' article refers only to the very old houses.

We will start on our return trip up Main Street which was promised some weeks ago at Brayton's Corner (corner North Main and North Streets) at the old house built and owned by Horatio G. Wood. We find him of the old firm of Peirce & Wood, cotton manufacturers, a business man. We find in him an old-time singer, whose music came from the very soul of man. He had three sons who were all musicians, but Mr. Wood was a singer. I well remember the last time I heard him sing. It was at an Old Folk's concert in the chapel. There he led the singing and at the last verse of the last piece his tuning fork, his music and his eyeglasses were all on the floor. He had put his whole spirit into the work. He used the English language. His youngest boy, Ebenezer, went to Europe and learned to play the violin of Ole Bull. When he returned home he was given a reception in Town Hall, for it was a great event in those days to go to Europe, but today it is as easy for folks to go to Europe as it is to go to Rocky Meadow.

The next house is the old Barrows house, owned and occupied by Abner Barrows. (Ed note. Where Grange Hall now stands) It was the first tavern in the village from the time Sproat's tavern at the Green was closed. It was used as a garrison during the Indian war and it would be well for the D.A.R.'s before they give any more lectures on the history of our town and about when John Thomson shot the Indian, to get the matter correct. This house should be kept as a historic spot. The D.A.R.'s should put into the ground an old stone boulder and put on it this inscription: "This marks the spot where John Thomson shot and killed the Indian." Abner Barrows was a farmer and owned a large farm. One son, Sylvanus, lived a little ways from him, and another son, Thomas, settled in Dedham and became a prominent business man there.

The next of old houses was known as the home of Charlton Bolles. I never heard but two things of him: that he was a very pious man and a good farmer.

Next the house now owned and occupied by George F. Bryant was owned by Martin Thompson. Nothing is left of that house but the length. All the rest has been remodeled.

The home of Jesse Holmes adjoined. I remember him well with his old bassoon. In those days he boarded scholars of Peirce Academy. In the rear of the house was a shoe shop where he used to remedy old shoes. It was a genial home, full of life and music. He raised a large family of children. His daughter Mary married one of the Fields of Brockton, D. W. Field being her son.

We'll talk about Sylvanus Barrows' place now. (Ed. note: corner of North Main and Reland) He was a son of Abner Barrows. He was a man closely identified with town affairs and was one of the old-time militia men. I think he was a captain and organized six different companies. Of his daughters, Susan and her sister Sarah were our leading milliners for many years.

And now we'll look up to that large house known as the Peirce house. There lived Peter H. Peirce and his wife, Nabby. They had ten children. I heard an uncle of their's once say that they belonged really to ten distinct families. They didn't seem to identify themselves with each other at all. There were three daughters and seven sons. Some of the boys went to college. I well remember when some members of William's class came out to see him. They were talking to him about what they were going to do in the future. It was a bright evening and there was a brilliant array of northern lights. William turned to his schoolmates and said, "I have a job already." They looked surprised and asked him what it was and he replied, "I am agent for the northern lights." Thomas seemed to be the real business head of the whole family. They did not know how to be generous but go and ask them to subscribe for anyone who was needy and they were always ready to respond. A peculiar family. . . . .

Next we will take up the home of Major Levi Peirce (Ed. note: later the Jenks homestead and Martinique) Within my remembrance it was the home of Elisha Tucker. And now I go beyond my own remembrance to state the fact that the house on Wareham Street which was so long occupied by Thacher B. Lucas (Ed. note: Raymond Meehan's house) was moved there when this present house was built. Elisha Tucker married a daughter of Major Levi Peirce. They had a daughter who married John Whipple Potter Jenks, who was principal of Peirce Academy and whose name was known to all parts of New England, an active, energetic man.

The next is that old building which has been remodeled and which in its day has been used for about everything. And now we come to the old hotel, the Nemasket House. That building I think was built by Daniel Thomas. In my early days it was run at first by Isaac Lane and his wife. . . . I remember that old hotel with those old-time men, Joseph Jackson, Joseph Clark, Milton Alden and Captain Sylvanus Barrows, seated around an open fire. . . . .

The next of the old buildings is now owned by Edgar D. Wood who has moved it to North Street. It was owned by Colonel Peirce and was occupied for many years by Eliah Ward as a lawyer's office, also as a harness shop. In fact about everything has been in that old building.

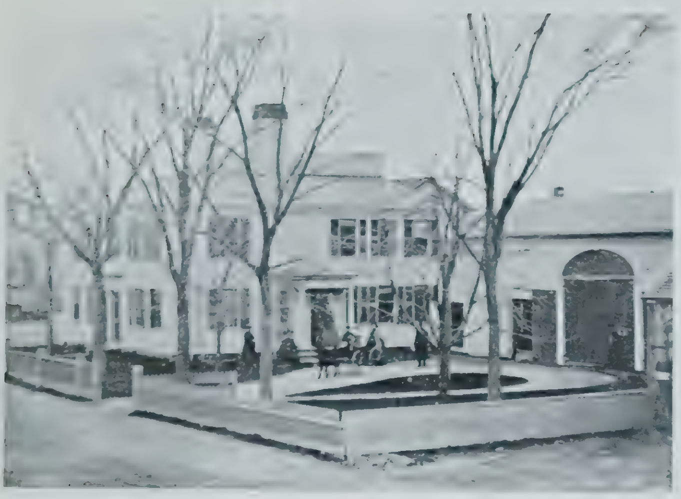
Next, where the postoffice is (the Peirce building) is where the old post office stood, kept by Allen Shaw. . . . He ran a drug store, in fact the only one we had. Jacob B. Shaw came as a clerk in Allen Shaw's store. Upstairs it is my impression the Gazette at one time was printed.

We'll cross the street (Centre Street) and on the corner stood the "old store." Deacon George Vaughan ran a tailor shop, a dry goods store and a grocery store. He built the house now occupied by Mrs. Calvin D. Kingman (Ed. note: part of St. Luke's Hospital) In his tailor shop came one Peter Fagan, as a pressman. . . . .

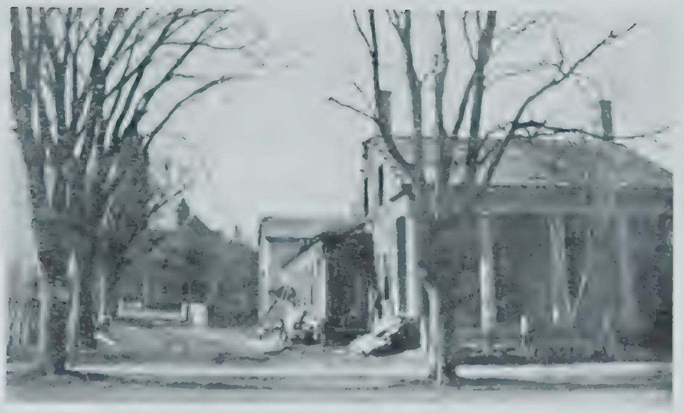
We next come to Allen Thatcher's house. Allen Thatcher was a gentleman of the old school. He married a daughter of Major Levi Peirce. He had one son whom we all remember as a musician, Levi P. Thatcher, and one daughter who became the wife of Robert K. Remington of Fall River.

Now we come to the old corner which led up to the Baptist church over somewhat historic ground, known as Temple Place. On that corner stood a house built by Dr. Arad Thompson. There he lived and had three daughters. One married Nathan King, another, William King and the end came to him very suddenly. The house finally passed into the hands of the Parker family. Through the generosity of one man (Hon. David G. Pratt) that house was taken down and removed to North Middleboro and there restored to the old original style, and the Unitarian Church that stood up by the red shoe shop was moved down to that corner. And Temple Place dropped out of existence like the dew of an early morning. The name, Temple Place, was given it, I am told, by Dr. Thompson because of the exclusiveness of the religion of a church and the folks who used it. . . . .

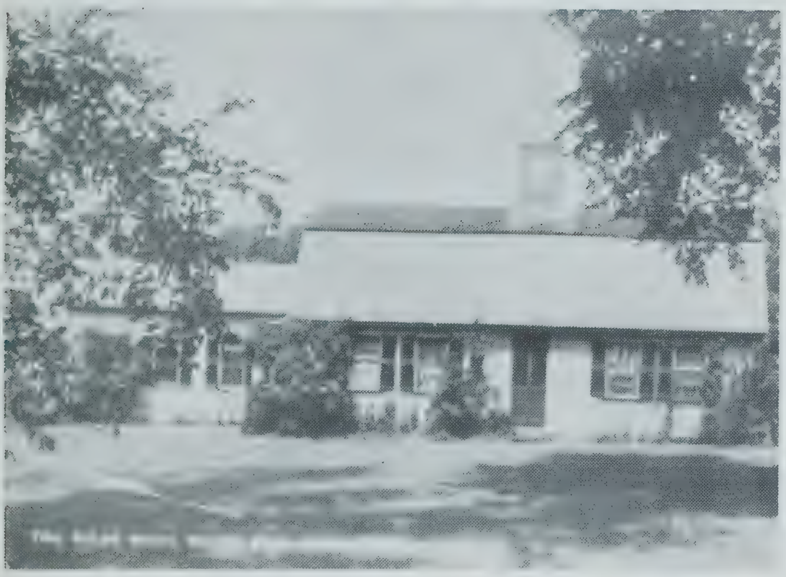
Then we come to the house built by Zachariah Eddy and occupied by Mrs. Maria Peirce. When I was a boy we had two law offices; one is still standing. It was the office of the Hon. Wilkes Wood. The other was the office of Zachariah Eddy in Eddyville. That was a very convenient place of the students of Peirce Academy to run in and get a taste of law. Everett Robinson studied law there and kept school in the school house on the other side of the road. The building was sold at auction and was bought by the father of D. D. Sullivan and moved to Vine Street. . . . .



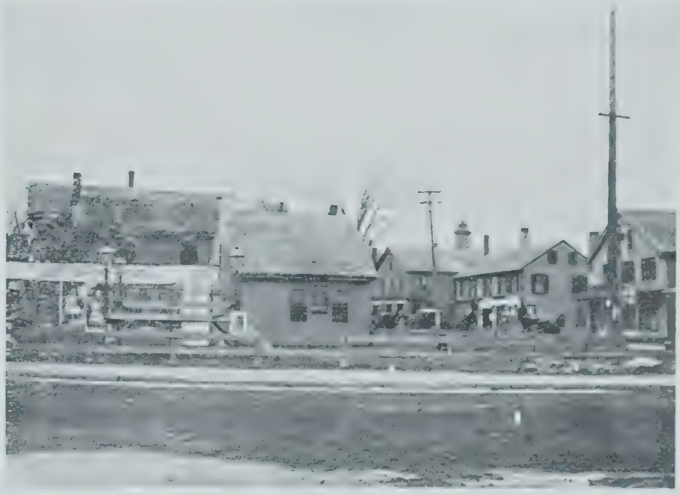
The old Thatcher Homestead



The Parker Family homestead that stood on the corner of South Main and Town House Avenue, where the Unitarian Church stands today.



The Old Silas Wood House, referred to as the home of Timothy Wood. The date on the chimney is 1771, but the original building is considerably older. (See Antiquarian Vol. IV, #3, June 1962.)



The band stand, town pump and the old building that once served as the office for the town clerk, treasurer and collector at the corner of South Main and Centre Street. The present bank building was erected in 1895.

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Next is the house occupied by Dr. Hodgson. (Ed. note: now occupied by Mrs. Gertrude B. Kenyon) As long ago as I remember, it was the home of Joseph Sampson on one side and Dr. Hitchcock on the other.

The next house, now occupied by Mr. Bradford Harlow (Ed. note: the Paul D. Sullivan house) was built by Hon. Isaac Stevens who was a lawyer here about ten years and who moved to Athol. The house was then occupied by Eben Briggs, the straw manufacturer, and he raised it a story from a cottage house to its present size.

Next came the house occupied by Edward F. Wood. It was built by a person named Hinds who moved to the Highlands when Dr. Perkins came down there. I remember the doctor well. He was our family physician. This house lot originally cost $12.00.

We next see a date on the chimney. That was the home of Timothy Wood. That house was left as a home for his children, and after the last one died it was to go to the heirs of Captain Abiel Wood. . . .

And now we come to the house occupied by Superintendent of Schools Bates (Ed. note: corner of South Main and Court End Ave.) It was the home of Deacon Ebenezer Pickens, who with his daughter Caroline and his twin sons lived there. The sons became manufacturers of straw hats here. The house was taken down and moved there (from Lakeville) and put up again.

Then came a small house occupied by a sea captain named Gibbs, and after him it went back eventually to the possession of its owner, Major Bourne. (Ed. note: site of the Elwyn B. Lynde home)

The house that stands back from the street, occupied by heirs of Col. King, (Ed. note: now occupied by the Hathaways) It was built by Mrs. King's father, Dr. Arad Thompson. In the person of Nathan King, we found a genial, social, old-time gentleman. . . .

And now we come to the home of one of the most eccentric families the world ever knew, known as the Thomases—Hark, Alden and Daniel. They were noted largely for their peculiarities and eccentricities of their lives. (Ed. note: the Walter Alger residence)

Next came the site of the old town house. Suffice it to say the old house is on North Street owned by heirs of Job Brady and made a two story house.

Across Grove Street on the corner is a house built by William Cushman. In my early days it was occupied by Major Branch Harlow and his wife Lurany. . . .

And now we come to the family that has been mentioned a good deal, and that family is that of the Hon. Wilkes Wood. We have been told again and again his son William was a good lawyer, Joseph a good deacon, Charles a minister and Cornelius, who married a sister of Philander Washburn, had very nigh all he could attend to. . . .

We now come to an old building, now standing, the property of Mrs. Copeland, known as "Levi Brigg's place," but very little can be said about Levi Briggs.

I now arrive at the home of Joseph Clark. The old gentleman was a doctor. I don't remember the old man, but I do recall his son Joseph and his wife and daughters. The last surviving member is Mrs. Rebecca Dorrance. Joseph Clark himself was what we would call today a veterinary. He knew and understood an animal better than the people of today.

And now our task is done.

James A. Burgess.

VARIOUS AND SUNDRY REMINISCENCES

By

Lyman Butler

MIDDLEBOROUGH'S FIRST JITNEY

As I remember, about 1914 the first jitney bus line started in town. It started with a Model T station wagon, A party in Bridgewater owned the line and it ran from that town to Middleboro by way of Warrentown where I lived at the time and I can remember the first jitney through.

All the people on the route had got advance information and a schedule and a little red flag to put on the lawn in bad weather so the bus would stop even if you were not out waiting.

This line was patronized quite well for a time as not too many people had cars at that time. One Saturday as I was going to town to take in a movie at town hall, and there were no seats left on the bus, so I stood on the running board. When we got to Muttock Hill several passengers had to get out and walk up as the old Model T wouldn't carry the load. Later on George Davidson started a line and after that came the Gurney jitney bus lines, and others.

A Corner of Our Blacksmith Shop in the Museum on Jackson Street furnished by Frank Everett Buckman. From anvil to wheel, as complete an exhibit as you can find in all New England. (Drop in)

MIDDLEBOROUGH OLD BLACKSMITH SHOPS

Blacksmithing used to be one of the principal occupations at the turn of the century and for some years later you could find many a shop conveniently located in the center of town and some on the outskirts. When I was very small, even before going to school, my father worked for George Morse who ran a small truck garden business along with his poultry and dairy, at the old Alfred Shaw place in Warrentown. In the summer I would ride along with my father, who peddled vegetables around the village with a horse and wagon. Occasionally the horse would lose a shoe or something would break on the wagon and we would stop at a blacksmith's to make repairs.

I remember Frank Warren's shop on Everett Street, later run by his son Dan, the old Lincoln shop on Wareham Street, McDonald's on Spencer Street, one was at the Green run by Job Clark, and one on Arch Street in the building later remodled into a dwelling occupied by Cliff DeCoff, one at Everett Sq. where Wright's Diner stands and of course Cosseboom's on North Street, one in Fall Brook run by Tom Benson which was on the corner of Cherry and Wareham Streets then known as Mitchel Corner; this has been made into a two tenement house. There were several more no doubt but as we did not get out of town too far I cannot remember them.

CREEDON FLOWER SHOP
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MIDDLEBORO, MASSACHUSETTS

ONSET TROLLEY

The first ride I had on a trolley car was on the Onset line. I had worked hard for a week after school to get car fare to Onset which I remember to be 25 cents each way.

Saturday morning my brothers and myself hiked to town from Warrentown and took the 9 o'clock car from the waiting room run by Tom Thompson.

After we were under way a few minutes the conductor came around with the coin collector which we called a monkey box, and as I did not realize I was supposed to put in a nickel each zone I put in my whole 25 cents. He thought I was paying for the crowd.

We got down to South Middleboro and below Houdlett's Corner the track went for quite a spell through the woods. On this stretch the motor man really let it out. It was quite a thrill then and I believe it would be today for the younger generation. There are still trolleys running, but only in the big cities.

OLD ROADS AND TRAILS

In this article I will try to tell of some of the old roads bounded by Precinct, Thompson and Plymouth Streets. I will try to make a verbal diagram of the various cart paths that many years ago were the only access to dwellings and even some roads that went right between a family's house and barn. Probably at that time there were no main roads in the vicinity they took the shortest road possible.

With the help of my friend Oscar Stets who lived on Precinct Street all of his childhood on the old J. Foley place, I will start with the road next to there which goes through the yard of the old Holmes place. A short way south is an old well which furnished water for this and another house long ago burned. The road then goes east, and another house stood in this section, then going in a south westerly direction coming out at Plymouth Street opposite Ja Mar Farm. A short way up this road are two cellar holes of houses that I am informed originally were Sproat houses before Judge Oliver took them over.

At this point Plymouth Street took a turn north and went by the home of Abiel Washburn and continued up by the old Muttock School coming out at what is now Picone Farm. Precinct Street also came out at about this spot. You can clearly see where the old road went up to the Washburn place since they cleared out for new Route 44. Nemasket Street also came down Muttock Hill and turned up and came into Plymouth Street in front of Washburns.

Now back to Precinct Street across from John Deane's house, a road went south and there was a cellar hole on this road of another Holmes house. This road comes out on Thompson Street at the old E. L. Shaw place. These roads were connected with many other roads but I don't remember any cellar holes so presume they were just short cuts in those days.

According to Wilfred Gabrey who lived in the old house at the river which was destroyed for the new road, there originally was a road down past his house and across the wading place in the river and up to Spring Street. Mr. Gabrey says that this house was also a Sproat house before Oliver took over the whole section.

MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS

If it wasn't for the Middleborough Gazette and that Museum Mouse, I don't know how I'd ever keep track of the historical memorabilia that keeps flowing into our clutches at the museum on Jackson Street; there seems to be no end in sight.

Although the two museum buildings have been closed, useful only as refrigerators, folks have been thinking of us and generously sending in family treasures and artifacts of the 19th century. To list them all properly, with even minimum description, would take the whole issue. I'll condense it as best I can.

Thanks to the thoughtful generosity of Mrs. Walter Sampson we now have the loving cup presented to Mr. Sampson by the Middleborough High School Class of 1915—and to Mrs. Ernest Pratt for the loving cup presented to Leonard O. Tillson by the Class of 1916; handsome pieces and we are proud of them. Thanks also to Mrs. Walter Sampson, through the courtesy of Justin Caswell, we now have the Walter Sampson Collection tracing Mr. Sampson's career through high school and Dartmouth College in diplomas, decorations and photographs. Mrs. Stanley Kruszyna brought in a neat lot of old time kitchen utensils—Albert A. Thomas an ancient cranberry scoop—Mrs. Irving Dunham some baby clothes of bygone days—Mrs. Rowena Cardoza a small collection of articles that once belonged to Tom Thumb—Mrs. Ernest Pratt (?? again—yes, again and again and again) a fine old quilt and a rug hooked ca. 1855.

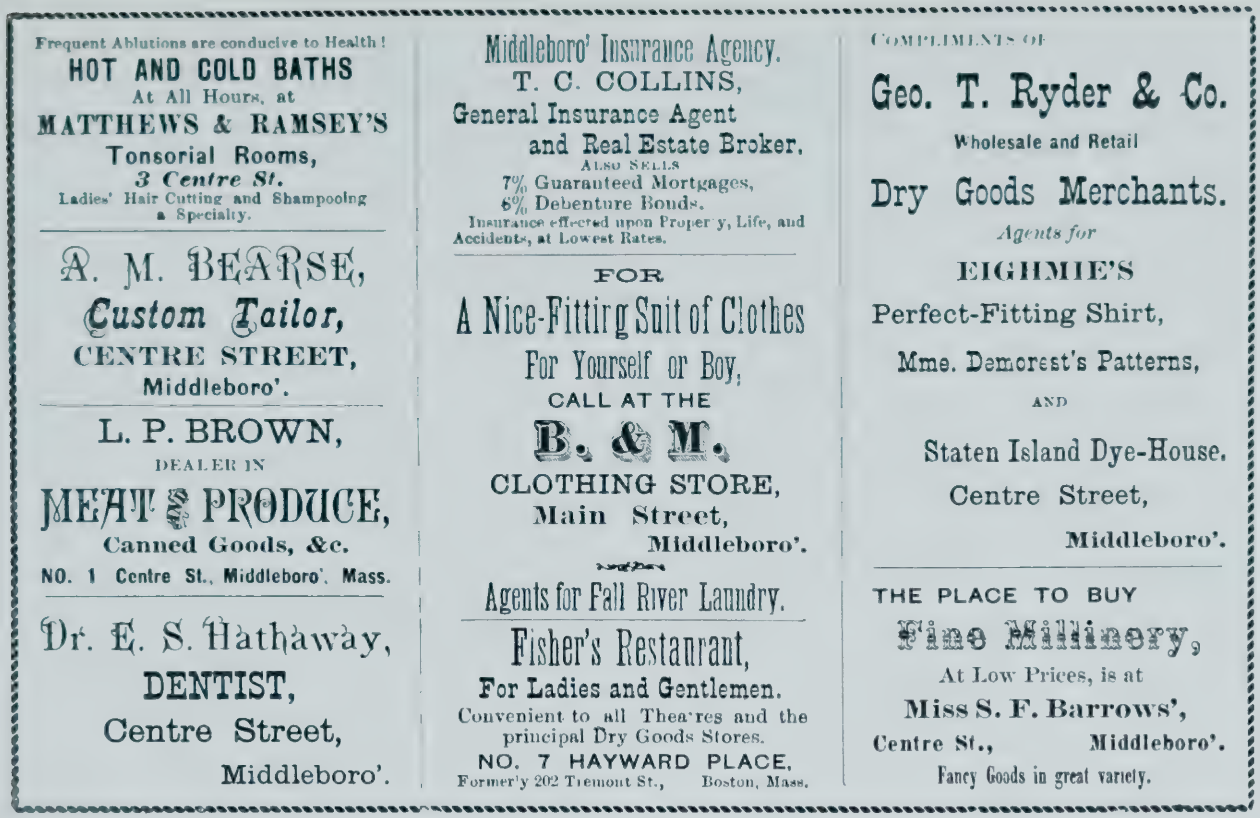
We are indebted to Miss Lydia Phillips of New Bedford for a daguerreotype of Sarah M. Shockley (1819-1903, and a framed picture of the old Shockley home in Lakeville — 1842. From Miss Alice Fish of Fall River comes an 1856 tuition bill of Peirce Academy signed by John Whipple Potter Jenks—and from Miss Jeannette Fuller of Mattapoisett **another** collection, the high spots being an early 18th century rocker with delightful turnings (even if it does need a new seat), a doll's chair, a child's chair on rollers with a tray for the "eat while you ride" babies, a cast iron nut cracker made by Sargent of New Haven ca. 1890, a fine old "belly-whopper" sled with the old stencil picture and a — well, I've got to stop there.

Again "Babe" McComiskey always seems to have us in mind. His old pine trundle bed is now fitted snugly under the Travaglini spool bed in the new bedroom, ropes and all, with its hand whittled rollers. He has just brought in (with the help of Lyman Butler, I suspect) a double action, two pedal grindstone with a very comfortable seat and every possible convenience for the tired farmer or exhausted hired boy. He also brought us several other pieces now in the carpenter's shop, among them a fine saw set—and etc.

Ted Eayrs again too. Most of you are now familiar with his model of Judge Oliver's iron works, and the Shovel Works that came along afterwards during the 19th century. (See Antiquarian Vol. VI, #4, and also page one this issue). Ted has been making models worthy of any museum for several years, but has steadfastly insisted they were juvenile and that the only real one is now in The Oliver Room at the museum. However, he has at last agreed with me that **maybe** they might have some educational value—AND WE HAVE ACQUIRED THEM—to wit:—"Water Power," "The Old Mill," "The Amish Farm," "New England Farm," "The Eagle Tavern 1773," " A Roman Cottage," and a 17th century home. We hope to have all on one wall next to the Oliver Room this June—and also the Ernest Pratt exhibit showing the ice industry in Middleborough backalong. Ted has also promised to be with us next Summer, part time, and plans a reconstruction of our Nicholson Collection of Indian artifacts WITH the story of the Titicutt Indians, and the manufactures of the Indians of Middleborough and Lakeville. With help like that coming up, how can we lose? A small collection of old Middleborough police badges has been given to the museum by Police Chief Lawrence Carter—and we hope to form a future exhibit in this facet of the town's history. Mrs. Joseph Cannucci of North Street discovered a cache of old bottles in her backyard, and (I believe, with Mrs. Hollis digging too) has contributed a representative collection, showing the drugs, perfumes and liniments used on North Street years ago. Bottle manufacturers from Massachusetts to Illinois created them and left their marks in the glass for future reference. I see I have got to close this. There are so many names I hate to leave out, but perhaps we can do it this way:—among other contributors to our museum collections are Lorimer Cummings, Buddy Marshall, Bud Martenson, Lyman Butler and, as the old auction notice reads "Many more too numerous to mention." I apologize for this slipshod way of ducking my own memory, and lack of proper records.

We wish to thank everyone who helped the Museum by sending their donations to the silent cake sale.

Doris A. Keith, Chairman,
Ways and Means Committee.



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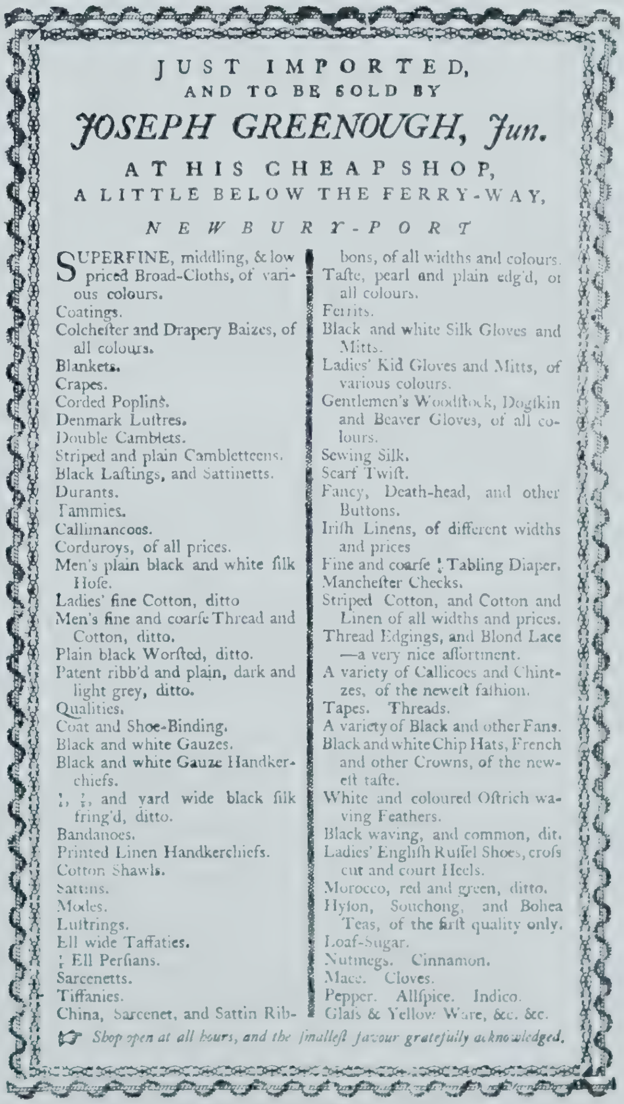
THE PLACE TO BUY
Fine Millinery,
At Low Prices, is at
Miss S. F. Barrows',
Centre St., Middleboro'.
Fancy Goods in great variety.

BATHS, DENTISTS, INSURANCE & SHIRTS FOR 1887.

I have read of baths and famous "watering places" and resorts back in the 1850-1875 period, but I have a hunch that even the old timers of Middleborough won't remember trotting down to MATTHEW'S & RAMSEY'S at No. 3 Centre Street (next to the Peirce Building) or a hot shower, and a shave, shoe-shine and haircut. "Frequent Ablutions are conducive to Health!" As a matter of fact, I don't suppose there were too many complete bathrooms and showers etc. kicking around at that. Even the best American hotels only got water upstairs just before the Civil War—and not too much of it at that. Plumbing as we know it was in its infancy, and many folks probably blessed Matthews & Ramsey for the privilege of a good scrub. A far cry from these fabulous times of every possible convenience. How long did Doctor Hathaway's gold fillings last? I'll bet they were fully as good as most of the best for 1965. As for Geo. T. Ryder's EIGHMIES, and Mme. DEMOREST'S PATTERNS, I doubt if any 1964 extravagancies can equal them. As a matter of fact I wouldn't be surprised at all if we had some samples in the costume room at the museum; better drop in and take a look. I don't think any of our Middleboro Insurance Agents mix things up with the banks and brokers in the investment field, but back in 1887 apparently T.C. Collins was game to sell bonds and stocks as well as insurance. I am also reasonably sure that if you have time to visit the museum when we open again that you'll find FINE MILLINERY created by Miss Barrows, clothing by A. M. Bearse, and some canned goods sold by L. P. Brown in the Peirce Store.

Ed's. Note. Just when American advertising began is a tough question. Many volumes date it with the first Boston newspaper at the turn of the 18th century ca. 1700, and others refer to the 1713 book auction catalogues as the real start. Between 1700 and the American Revolution we have preserved many examples, principally in the book, drug and seed facets of Americana:—Benjamin Franklin's catalogue of choice books for sale in 1744, John Tweedy's drug and chemical catalogue for 1760, and William Prince's broadside list of shrubs and fruit trees for 1771.

Although this isn't even scraping the surface of a small division of American development, I thought it might interest you all to compare the 1784 broadside issued by Joseph Greenough, Jr. of Newburyport with the Middleborough 1887 circular, AND the current advertising of our local businessmen and manufacturers who through their cooperation, interest and generosity have made it possible for the Antiquarian to begin its seventh year.



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Coat and Shoe-Binding.
Black and white Gauzes.
Black and white Gauze Handkerchiefs.
¾, ⅞, and yard wide black ſilk fring'd, ditto.
Bandanoes.
Printed Linen Handkerchiefs.
Cotton Shawls.
Sattins.
Modes.
Luſtrings.
Ell wide Taffaties.
¾ Ell Perſians.
Sarcenetts.
Tiffanies.
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Ferrits.
Black and white Silk Gloves and Mitts.
Ladies' Kid Gloves and Mitts, of various colours.
Gentlemen's Woodſtock, Dogſkin and Beaver Gloves, of all colours.
Sewing Silk.
Scarf Twiſt.
Fancy, Death-head, and other Buttons.
Iriſh Linens, of different widths and prices
Fine and coarſe ¾ Tabling Diaper.
Mancheſter Checks.
Striped Cotton, and Cotton and Linen of all widths and prices.
Thread Edgings, and Blond Lace —a very nice aſſortment.
A variety of Callicoes and Chintzes, of the neweſt faſhion.
Tapes. Threads.
A variety of Black and other Fans.
Black and white Chip Hats, French and other Crowns, of the neweſt taſte.
White and coloured Oſtrich waving Feathers.
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Morocco, red and green, ditto.
Hyſon, Souchong, and Bohea Teas, of the firſt quality only.
Loaf-Sugar.
Nutmegs. Cinnamon.
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Pepper. Allſpice. Indico.
Glaſs & Yellow Ware, &c. &c.

☞ *Shop open at all hours, and the ſmalleſt favour gratefully acknowledged.*

PRINTED BY JOHN MYCALL, 1784.

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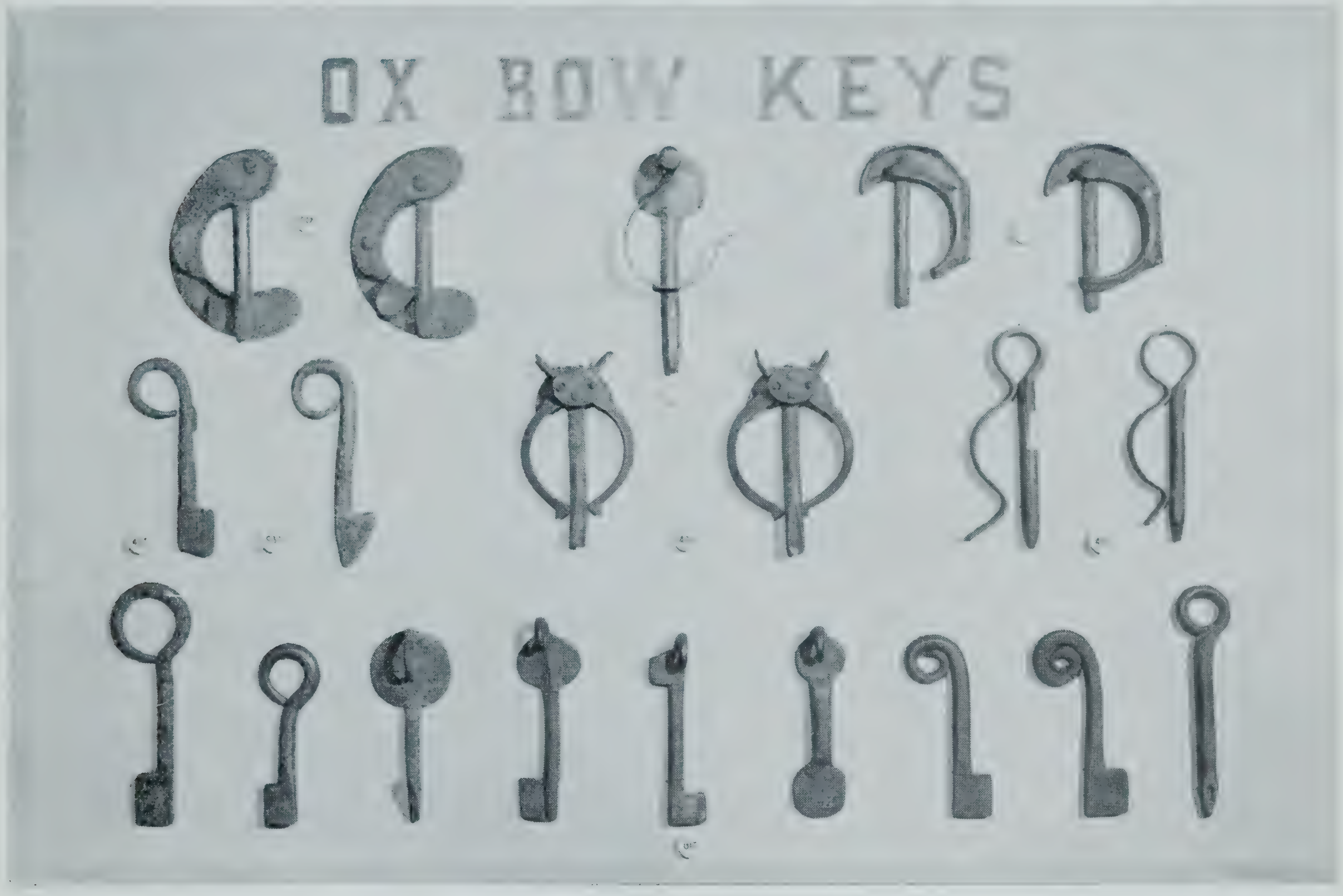
VOLUME VII APRIL 1965 NUMBER 2



MAN OF IRON.

by

Lawrence B. Romaine

Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith a mighty man is he
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

The Village Blacksmith by
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Back along when General Electric meant no more to the American people than a good thunderstorm like the one to which Benjamin Franklin tied a key, there lived a man in every community known as the blacksmith — or perhaps just the smith. A few of us in our later years still remember the blacksmith shops where horse shoes, carriage and wagon accessories, hubs, irons and wheels were manufactured and where heavy hardware could be made or mended. The few that are still in business are really machine shops, for the blacksmith, with very few exceptions, has become a twentieth century mechanic. Some of these blacksmith-mechanics still travel to farms in northern New England shoeing horses and doing odd jobs with motor driven forges and modern equipment.

Although reference books are being published by the millions for and by our historical societies, museums and reference libraries, most of them extol the art and craftsmanship of the architect, cabinetmaker, glass blower, potters, fashion designers and weavers, and many others whose artifacts are more collectible as antiques. For this reason I would like again to place on the pages of printed American history a very incomplete and short record of the man who not only created and designed many of our luxuries and necessities, but who also manufactured most of the tools for **all** the other craftsmen! In the same breath and paragraph, I would like to erase the general impression that a blacksmith made only horse shoes and wheels for those who **can** remember, and also for those who have never seen a real blacksmith at work, try to create an image and picture of his importance to each community back in the childhood days of the U.S.A. *See last issue—Middleborough Blacksmith Shops by Lyman Butler.

To do this job without illustrations would be futile because most people today wouldn't even know what a potter's wheel was, or be able to visualize an ox bow key, bull ring, staghorn hinge, oak box-lock, wagon jack, turnkey, revolving griddle oven door, see illustration #6 and #7, butterfly hinge or even the forerunners of modern electric curlers and Tonies. It will be impossible to illustrate more than examples once in use from the kitchen to the stable, but I'll try to describe in detail the implements of which we have no cuts available.

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Lumber – Building Materials – Masons' Supplies
Grain – Feed

Let's start with ox bow keys. These pins or keys were used to hold the bows in place in the yoke. Undoubtedly many farmers used whittled oak pins, but I imagine those who could afford to have the blacksmith make a good substantial wrought iron key found them good for a lifetime and more economical in the long run.

The earliest designs or forms (Illustration No. 1) used in the 18th, and possibly 17th, centuries, fill the bottom row (9 examples) plus the two at left in the second row. The next development is shown in the two forms at right, second row, and one in center, top row. The later inventions — easier to insert in the bows, and with spring steel gadgets to make sure they couldn't come loose — are shown in the second row, pair in the center, and the top row, two pair at far left and far right.

It is nearly impossible to date these small but very important bits of iron. This collection was made right here at Weathercock House in North Middleborough, and is now preserved at Wading River, Long Island, New York, in the private museum of Mr. & Mrs. James A. Keillor.

In cut No. 2 we have a small collection of miniature examples of versatility. This illustration must serve two purposes in that the tiny fireplace and the dustpan were made by the tinsmith (center bottom and top rows), and the rest represent the anvil, forge and foundry. It is generally believed that many a smith fashioned tiny replicas of household necessities for his own and his neighbor's children and grandchildren. For instance, the two small spiders at left, bottom row, measure 2½" diameter with 2½" handles; if you can think of any "vittles" that could be cooked in one on coals in the old fireplace you may prove me in error. At left, bottom row, we have a sad-iron stand or trivet measuring 2½" x 3¼" in the heart motif obviously for the tiny sad-iron beside it. What, Good Ladies, would you iron with this? Continuing **top left** we have a miniature ratchet trammel, and at the far right, top row, a saw tooth trammel — there were also chain trammels, pot hooks, extension pot hooks and swivel pot hooks — and I suppose I must stop here and explain these words in terms of a seven foot fireplace to clarify their real use. The earliest trammels hung from the lug-pole, usually of oak, that was built into the chimney. The lug-pole was usually six to eight feet above the hearth so that it would not catch fire, and the trammels, whether chain, ratchet or saw construction could be adjusted so that pots and "kittles" could be boiling furiously or simmering at the discretion of the cook. Other smaller trammels of the same adjustable designs hung from the old wrought iron cranes, also made by the smith; he also made various pot hooks, long and short, that hung many different cooking receptacles at bake, boil or simmer. One saw tooth trammel at Weathercock House measures six feet long and bears the initials of the smith, the man for whom he made it, and the date 1747. You will find many examples in the old kitchen and in the smithy at our historical museum buildings on Jackson Street; in fact, when you have the time, I think you may examine most of the articles in these notes — and more — right — as that news bit on radio says — in your home town. The two small toy spatulas, or shovels (or as one student of American tools still insists, button hole cutters), measure 4½" long. IF your imagination lets you dream of lifting an egg from a 2½" spider — dream on — I think they were toys — or perhaps the one with the handle tapered into a fancy heart finial, a bit of ornamental work for a sweetheart. This illustration, on second thought, serves three purposes because it not only explains several of the blacksmith's contributions to early American cooking, but shows them in miniature, adding to his brawn and strength his ability to create and design, and his love of the youngsters in his community. So much for plate No. 2.

Before we leave the kitchen and the domestic scene for general hardware, architectural designs, the stable and transportation, and a myriad of other things, let me place before you a few more of the simple little necessities and luxuries our man of iron fashioned for the 18th century home. Do you recognize the iron gadgets in illustration #3? I seem to remember when we bought the last modern ones, and thinking they were only unusually long finish nails that always got in my way when carving the turkey. These wrought iron skewers, made on the anvil, measured from 5" to 10" long and of course held various cuts of beef and fowl together while roasting on wrought iron spits of many designs — also made by the smith — some of them automatic, strange as this may seem, and turned by clock, dog and wind power. The skewer holders that hung in a handy place by the fireplace were another opportunity for the maker to use his imagination — often they had hearts cut in them, some stars, but all fashioned like those in our cut to hold the skewers ready for work.

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In No. 4 most of you girls will recognize the early forms of what you may remember using over a small alcohol flame (IF you're over 60), or whatever it is you use today, from electric plastics to Tonies; this is not my field and I refuse to get involved. At any rate, the hair curlers in this illustration were made by the smith, of wrought iron, and shoved in the same old coals on the hearth that made the soup and toasted the home made bread and broiled the bacon. Some were for hair and some for ruffles, and the term spit curls seems to come to mind, whatever they were — or, do you still use them? One of the finials is very fancy (fifth from the left, bottom row) and again shows the old man's love of design — perhaps for his grand-daughter? If you'd like to try one, drop in the blacksmith shop on Jackson Street and ask the hostess in the kitchen if she'll let you heat it up on the old hearth; however, we carry no insurance against what may happen to your hair.

Illustration No. 5

Illustration No. 6

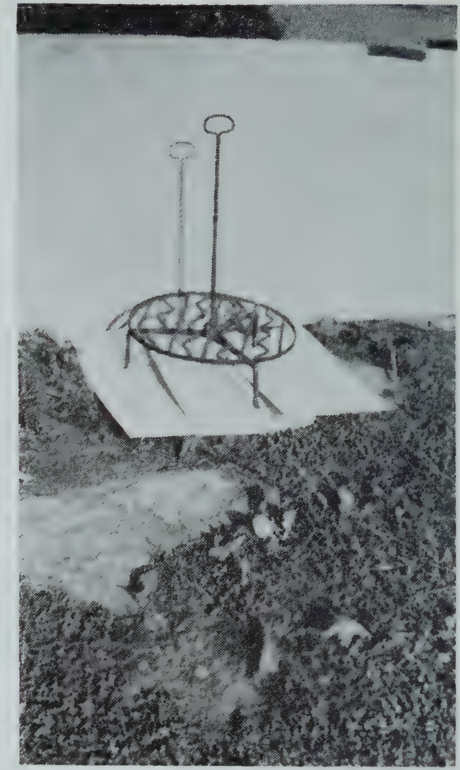

Illustration No. 7

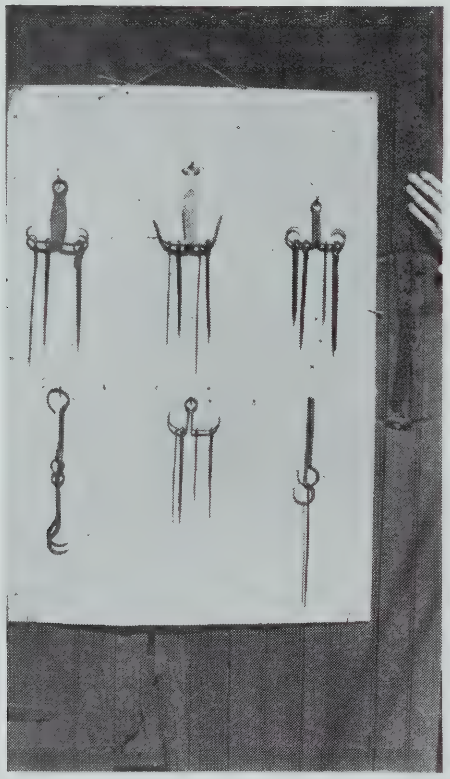

Illustration No. 3

No. 5 shows a wrought iron ratchet table candlestand, set in a pine block, to light the family to supper as well as help the cook. There isn't time or space to go into similar devices that held dried fish and oiled tapers in earlier days, but whenever they were in use, you can bet your boots the local smith fashioned them, both for floor and table. Although we have no illustrations, he also made the Betty lamps with their crude hooks, wick catchers and fancy ornamental embellishments — as well as the wrought iron trammels (see illustration #2, top row right) from which they hung on wooden cranes and could be adjusted needed light in the most advantageous spot for all concerned, whether for cooking, eating, reading or curling the hair with the tongs from the hearth.

Illustration No. 4

Although we do not have pictures, and, both time and space are of the essence as usual in this mad era of atoms and progress, let me jot down a few of the many other artifacts from the anvil without which domestic bliss would have been even tougher back along. He made the trivets for all sizes of irons, — the roasters, broilers, toasters, — plain, ornamental, revolving and even with brass rails to hold the bread; he made the lintels for both fireplace and oven, the five and six foot peels with which to take the bread from the old brick oven when done, as well as the four to six foot fry-pans whose long handles must have saved many a red face and burned hand. He designed and fashioned the fire-dogs or andirons to hold the huge logs in place, and also supplied the wrought tongs and pokers. After the oven was heated properly and the carefully dried oak and maple ashes were cleaned out — Aha, you didn't know they built the fire IN the oven and used the main chimney draft? — sure did, that is until about the beginning of the 19th century when ovens were built on the side wall of fireplaces and had a flue connecting: now where was I, Well, our blacksmith of course had to manufacture a long handled gadget with a curved blade to clean the oven floor before the bread was put in to bake. (See illustration # , left, beside the wagon jack). On most kitchen tables there was usually a pair of sugar cutters because in those days sugar came in a loaf, and NOT in small

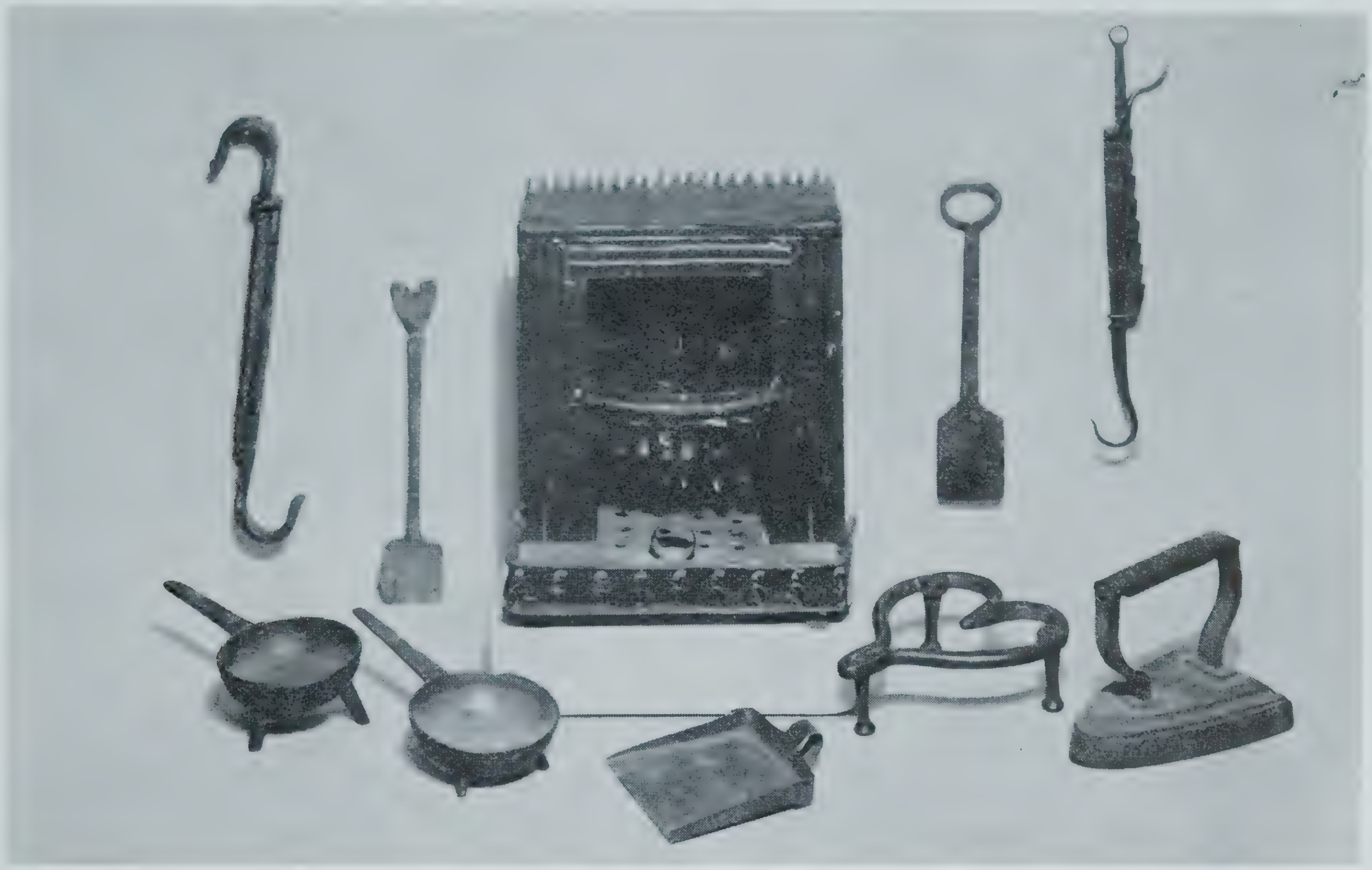

Illustration No. 2

cubes or these nuisance paper things in restaurant booths! You cut your own piece whatever size you wanted. There were also large size cutters that nailed to the tables in stores. Pot lifters were very necessary to take the pots and kettles from trammel and crane pot hooks, and these too were often ornamental ironwork. Bails or handles for all sorts of hollow ware — and even well buckets — were on hand at the smithy, whether to replace or for new cooking pieces. Hanging by or near most fireplaces in the 18th century were a pair of pipe tongs with which both the master of the house and the hired-man seized live coals from the hearth, held them to their pipes, and then tamped down the burning tobacco. Some of these were works of art with graceful lines, the handle tapering into a flat pipe bowl size perforated finial with which to tamp, and a spike with which to clean out the ashes. Matter of fact I've used one right here and find it more convenient than the new gifty-wifty, dust catching, very expensive creations of our twentieth century — and with at least one birthday pipe for nearly forty-five years, plus Christmas, I ought to know. Hanging nearby one could almost always find small shears for many purposes and of many sizes — and these were usually made from spring steel or iron in one piece; also, perhaps in the adjoining shed on a work bench, beside the dry wood pile, an iron ruler and square. (Don't doubt me — I have one). Of course too, the kitchens were supplied with all manner of long and short forks, ladles, spoons and cooking utensils, as well as the "eating irons" on the old pine trestle table. Though wood and pewter supplied most of the plates, bowls and trenchers if you go back far enough, there were many pieces of iron hollow ware, and a few plates and small saucepans of wrought iron from the forge.

Before we go outside for a breath of air, I'd like to mention that many of the household furnishings in parlor, bedroom and laying out room also came from the smithy. The andirons had brass finials, and the wrought candlestands and lights were a bit fancier, but whatever they were, they came from the man with the brawny arms as strong as iron bands.

(To be continued in the next issue)

BEN CHAPMAN'S STORE AND DINER.

By Lyman Butler

Many remember when Ben Chapman ran the motor and bicycle shop on South Main Street, but I wonder how many remember when he had the variety store on Everett Street between his house and the railroad to Plymouth.

You could buy groceries, soda, ice cream and all kinds of candy as well as small toys and balloons, which the children of that day enjoyed as much as the really expensive toys of today. As Ben ran the bike shop daytimes, his wife took care of the store at home.

She was a very kind and respected lady and all of us kids enjoyed going over for a bottle of pop or some ice cream. At this time Everett Street was old Route 28 and Ben's store did very well. A favorite pastime for us young ones was to get a bottle of pop and set on the banks of the railroad bridge and watch for the trains to Plymouth.

A short time later Ben moved a diner onto a spot where Robert Clark's dwelling stood before it was moved up to the junction of North and Everett Streets when the new Route 44 took the land. This was a very popular place with the teenagers as well as the many motorists that used Route 28 to the Cape. At this time the Model T was very popular as well as some of the so called expensive cars such as Winton Apperson, Packard and others, and traffic was heavy. The diner stayed open for some time but as the summer visitors began to use the new Route 28, business dropped off and Ben closed up and sold the diner.

I went down to the Cape at Hyannis last summer and happened to see Ben. He was nearly ninety years old and although he has lost a leg, he still gets around well and runs a lunch canteen. He is known as the Java man. Ben comes through town occasionally and renews old times with his many friends.

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SAVE BY MAIL — POSTAGE PAID BOTH WAYS
GENEROUS DIVIDENDS — COMPOUNDED QUARTERLY

Excerpt from the forth-coming second volume of the Middleboro History. Mrs. Mertie Witbeck is at work preparing the history to be published in connection with the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the town of Middleboro, to be observed in 1969.

MIDDLEBORO POST OFFICE

From the turn of the century the status of the Middleboro Post Office improved steadily, year by year, until the new Federal building was erected in 1933. In 1902, post office quarters were moved from the Thatcher block on Centre Street to the first floor of the Peirce building, corner of Centre and North Main Streets. In that same year, on January 31st, the first rural delivery of mail was begun with Seth A. Eaton and A. R. Dustin serving as the first rural mail carriers. Nineteen years before, in 1893, the local post office under the postmastership of Augustus M. Bearse, instituted free delivery service with John L. Tinkham and L. Bertrand Mendall as the first mail carriers. Another milestone was passed when on January 3, 1913, Postmaster Bearse sent to his mother in Chatham the first parcel post package to be sent from the local post office. Under the postmastership of James H. Creedon, the Middleboro post office was raised to first class on July 1, 1921. Mr. Creedon was succeeded by William R. Farrington and it was while he was in office that plans were completed for a new federal building. Mr. Farrington was destined not to see the completion of those plans since he died suddenly shortly before the new building was opened.

THE NEW POST OFFICE BUILDING

In the late 1920's, officials came from Washington to Middleboro looking for a site for a new post office building. Two sites received the most serious consideration: the parking lot beside the Town Hall, and the site on which stood the Peirce Academy. There was some hesitation about taking the parking lot as there was a stipulation in the deed given by Philander Washburn when he conveyed to the town the large parcel of land for the Town Hall including what came to be used as a parking lot, that he wished no other building ever to be erected on the site.

Other sites which were offered included the lot on the corner of North Main and Peirce Streets where stood the Jenks homestead, at that time the Martinique owned by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Martin; the lot on North Main Street on which was located the Peirce family homestead, then owned by Andrew J. Pasztor; the site of the old P. H. Peirce grocery store, with plans of the Peirce trustees to move the store onto Jackson Street; and the lot on Centre Street occupied by Peirce Academy. From the first, this latter site was favored. The Academy, owned by the Central Baptist Society, was not a paying proposition and the time had arrived when many expensive repairs were necessary. The members of the Society voted to sell the Academy and the land if it was desired by federal authorities.

Protests against the loss of the historic Academy building were many and vehement. Hundreds of letters of protest were received. Mr. Kenelm Winslow with the Old Middleborough Historical Society worked diligently to save the building. For just a brief moment it looked as if their efforts might be successful. The Academy had become the location of the Fourth District Court and of the local police station and lockup. The upper floor was headquarters for E. W. Peirce Post, Grand Army of the Republic and allied organizations. The loss of the building would mean all these would have to seek new quarters. After the decision was made and the lot and Academy was purchased by the government for $18,000, the idea was conceived of moving the Academy onto Nickerson Avenue where the Park Theatre stood, on land adjacent to "Temple Place" which was owned by the Baptist Society. A plan was worked out whereby some of the buildings on the avenue could be moved, the Thatcher printing plant moved back toward Centre Street and land purchased from the Thatcher family. This arrangement would assure the county commissioners quarters for court rooms and the town for a police station and lockup.

A conference was called attended by Mr. Goodale, town manager, the selectmen, the county commissioners and Morrill S. Ryder representing the Baptist Society. Three meetings were held and the plan carefully investigated, but the cost was deemed prohibitive and the plan was abandoned. Temporary quarters were found for the police station and lockup in the Hayes building on North Main Street and for the court in Lyric Hall on South Main Street.

All efforts to save the Academy having been in vain, work of demolition began on March 26, 1932. On the Sunday afternoon before destruction began, the old bell in the Academy tower tolled its valedictory. The bell was tolled from five-thirty to six o'clock by Leavitt Caswell of Lakeville, who had been a student at the Academy, The bell was presented to the Old Middleborough Historical Society which later returned it to the Baptist Society to be used in their new church built in 1964. Wreckers disposed of various parts of the building, much of the lumber and the heating plant going to Cathedral Camp at Long Pond, Lakeville. As a last rite, the remaining debris was piled in the cellar hole and burned.

Thus one of the best known schools of its time passed into oblivion. People from all over the United States and many foreign countries, including some who became world-renowned, came as students to this place of learning. To quote General Ebenezer Peirce in his "History of the Peirce Family:" Perhaps there is nothing in past years which has added so much to the reputation of Middleboro and made it so widely known, as Peirce Academy.

The contract for the new federal building was given Smyth and Company of Washington, D.C., for $69,268. Work on the excavation for the new building was begun in April, 1932, and continued until February, 1933. On February 20th of that year the public was invited to inspect the new building and on February 23rd the post office was open for business under the direction of Joseph Cooper, acting postmaster.

COURT HOUSE AND POLICE STATION

As soon as the decision was made to raze the Academy building, town officials were faced with the problem of finding permanent accomodations for the police station and lockup. Choice was narrowed down to purchase of the P. H. Peirce grocery store. On December 21, 1931, a special town meeting was held to act on an article calling for a vote to authorize the selectmen to petition the legislature for authority to purchase the P. H. Peirce property, so called, including land and buildings on North Main Street and to remodel the building to furnish accomodations for a police station, lockup, comfort stations and court rooms, and to borrow such sums as necessary for the work. After much discussion, the vote passed after an amendment was made and accepted that the expense not exceed $55,000.

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The trustees of the estate of Thomas S. Peirce expressed their willingness to aid by offering to assist in financing the proposed project by selling to the town for a sum of $13,000 the Peirce store with a substantial amount of land if the town would agree to substantially adopt plans prepared by the county commissioners, to start work as soon as possible and agree to use Middleboro labor entirely.

A second special town meeting was called on April 8, 1935, when it was voted to borrow $35,000 for the purchase of the P. H. Peirce grocery store and to remodel the building into quarters for a police station, lockup, comfort stations and Fourth District Court.

It was intended at this time to do the work under W.P.A. (Works Progress Administration) but before an application could be made, President Roosevelt issued orders that any project the cost of which would exceed $25,000 must be done under P.W.A. (Public Works Administration) To meet these requirements the plans were revised, which brought the estimated cost to $46,000 and the United States government was petitioned through W.P.A., to make a grant to assist in this work. A grant of $20,000 was given and accepted by the town. In December, 1935, the contract for remodeling the building was awarded to Joseph N. Fish of Dorchester, Massachusetts. An interesting circumstance in connection with the project was the choice of resident engineer, Paul H. Roberts, a former Middleboro resident, who, in his boyhood, worked in the old grocery store.

Work was begun in December, 1935, and continued through September, 1936, at which time the building was finished and accepted by the government and the building committee, of which Selectman Lewis F. Harding was chairman. Dedication exercises were held October 29, 1936. The police department, under supervision of Chief Alden C. Sisson, moved into the new police quarters in the northern wing of the building on September 1, 1936; the Fourth District Court, for which the county commissioners signed a lease to run twenty years at $2,200 per year, took possession of their rooms at the same time. The final cost of the building was $65,000, of which the government paid $20,000, the Peirce trustees $5,800 and the town $38,500. In remodeling the Colonial structure, great care was taken to preserve the outward appearance of the original store.

P. H. PEIRCE AND COMPANY GROCERY STORE

Thus was preserved a fine old building in which a fortune was made of which $500,000 was left for the benefit of the town of Middleboro.

A history of the old Peirce grocery store covers a span of more than one hundred and fifty years. At the time of remodeling, judging from lumber used in the original building, it was estimated to have been built about 1808. Peter H. Peirce and Company consisted of Colonel Peter Hoar Peirce and his three sons, Job, Thomas and James. It was in truth a genuine, old-time general store. In the back room were bolts of cloth, shirts, aprons and an assortment of ribbons, buttons and thread. In another part of the store were sold farming implements, oilcloth, carpets and wallpaper. The cellar contained a room set apart for the sale of rum, gin, brandy and all spirituous liquors, giving rise to a remark often heard, that the fortune left to Middleboro was made in rum and molasses. The front part of the main store was used for the sale of groceries, penny candy, potatoes, grain, kerosene and all the other commodities a good country store carried in those days.

Once, one of a group always to be found near the pot-bellied stove, challenged the boast of Colonel Peirce that he could supply any request, whatever it might be. The challenger wagered he could ask for an article the Colonel could not produce. Upon being questioned as to what it was, he confidently replied, "A second-hand meeting house pew door." The Colonel disappeared into the loft and came back bringing just such a door, probably one of several taken in trade for groceries or a debt.

On the second floor of the store was a hall large enough to seat two hundred people. Here town meetings and entertainments were held and here members of the Catholic church met until there was a Catholic church building in town.

Colonel Peter H. Peirce and his wife, Nabby, built their home across the street from the store in 1814. When the house was built, the sloping lawn extended into the middle of South Main Street. Later when the street was widened, the lawn was cut back and a granite wall built in front of the property.

The house was purchased in 1904 by Andrew J. Pasztor. Several years after Mr. Pasztor's death the property was purchased by Ellis G. Williams who converted the lower floor into a paint and lumber store, renting the upper floors for offices and apartments. Mr. Williams was very careful not to change the beautiful "floating" staircase or the fine paneling in the building. In October, 1956, a corporation was formed for the purpose of preserving the homestead as a memorial to one of Middleboro's great benefactors. The group organized as "Colonel Peter H. Peirce House, Inc.," with Mrs. Patrick Gordon as president. Papers were passed and the corporation took possession November 1, 1956. This action was no doubt precipitated by the application of the Tidewater Oil Company for permission to store and sell gasoline at the site, which would have meant razing the house and the building of a gas and service station.

Colonel Peirce died January 27, 1861 at the age of seventy-two years. Of his sons, Job was the first to die, James and Thomas both departing this earth in 1901. Thomas being the last survivor, it was he who left the town a half a million dollars. The Thomas S. Peirce Estate, administered by three trustees of whom the original were Chester E. Weston, George R. Sampson and George W. Stetson.

In 1902, P.H.Peirce and Company was purchased by Herbert A. Pratt and Elton L. Pratt, brothers who had for many years been affiliated with the store. They carried on the business under the same name and in the same tradition established by Colonel Peter Peirce and his sons. Mr. Herbert Pratt died in 1929 and when Mr. Elton Pratt died early in 1935, the key was turned in the old store lock for the last time.

The building itself has been preserved for posterity by the farsightedness of town officials in remodeling it for use by the town and county; the old grocery store, as such, has been perpetuated in the Middleborough Historical Museum. Here in the museum's country store are the original grain bins, a counter and high accountant's desk just as they were used in the old store, salvaged from the attic after remodeling of the building. In the replica of the store is to be found just about everything that was found in the original P. H. Peirce grocery store, including a second-hand meeting house pew door.

HOLD THAT HISTORICAL LINE

The fine old Yankee pine panelling that now creates atmosphere in General Mills Minneapolis museum kitchen once lent 18th century charm to the Earl Henry Cushman home on Vernon Street nearly opposite Mrs. Van Steenberg's old home, now owned by the Varney family (see Vol. I, #3, page 4). Indeed Middleborough 18th century architectural interiors are well scattered, and their documentation and provenience lost to local history. Tom Thumb's saddle, ornamented with precious stones set in gold recently sat in a Texas bookshop window. There is another story about a court cupboard. The old General West home that used to be on Fuller Street has been torn down, and the interior woodwork is now lost on Cape Cod; likewise the Colonel John Nelson home that used to sit opposite the Lakeville School has gone "down the Cape." Let's try to stop this emmigration of our local landmarks. Don't let that "quitters" philosophy: — "It's too late," — ruin your appreciation of the historic sites still begging for preservation. Watch out for those institutional secret plays and end runs with the dollar signs — let's hold the fort and take care of what posterity has left us.

OUR ARCHITECTURAL "IN-BETWEENS"

by

Clinton E. Clark

Every New England town has its share of architectural landmarks that eloquently bespeak its history and these, not uncommonly, will include one or more well-preserved examples of "Early American" or "Colonial" ways and means of providing shelter.

Such buildings are excellent points of reference to the town's early history and are duly appreciated and admired.

But there were other eras of architecture between the Judge Peter Oliver House, 1769 for example, and the "modern, six-room ranch" currently in style. These "in-betweens" are fascinating and also deserve recognition as reflections of progress and changing preferences in the town's development.

The "in-betweens" demonstrate that in addition to shelter from the elements, man developed a desire to make his home a symbol of status in his community. The particularly interesting thing about this impulse is that each in his time tended to build along lines that were in vogue. These variations on the fundamental theme of shelter are closely tied to history.

This town's fair representation of the period when the Mansard roof bespoke elegance and good fortune is illustrative.

The so-called "French Roof" was named after the celebrated architect, Francois Mansart, who died in 1666. More than 200 years later, this elegant roof form, originally designed for the practical purpose of making attics roomy, became popular.

It flourished in France, in private and public construction and was widely copied in Europe and England. It reached its peak, however, in America, where it appealed to a growing, vigorous nation.

The Mansard style gained supremacy here and was popular until the mid-1870's; sometimes longer. Still intact in Middleboro is the estate house built for Mrs. Tom Thumb in Warrentown section, plus many others throughout the town.

By employing the Mansard roof, a house that might otherwise have had two useable stories, became a symbol of elegance and prosperity. Interestingly, there are at least two local examples of the Mansard roof on two-story dwellings.

Inevitably, this style had its critics, but the fine examples in Middleboro support the claim that, under a Mansard roof, a house could be both handsome and comfortable. Apparently Middleboro, in the mid-to-late 19th Century had many men of means who agreed with this claim.

Not as common in Middleboro was the era of American architecture that attempted to simulate the romantic Italian villa style. The house pictured here seems to be one of the few local examples of a style that was in vogue until the eve of the Civil War.

This was called the Italianate Period; one which offers a contrast with the somewhat pompous air of the Mansard and Victorian styles in its simplicity.

The style, in fact, is strikingly similar to the cleanliness of line, the suggestion of austerity, that marks the "modern" mode of architecture.

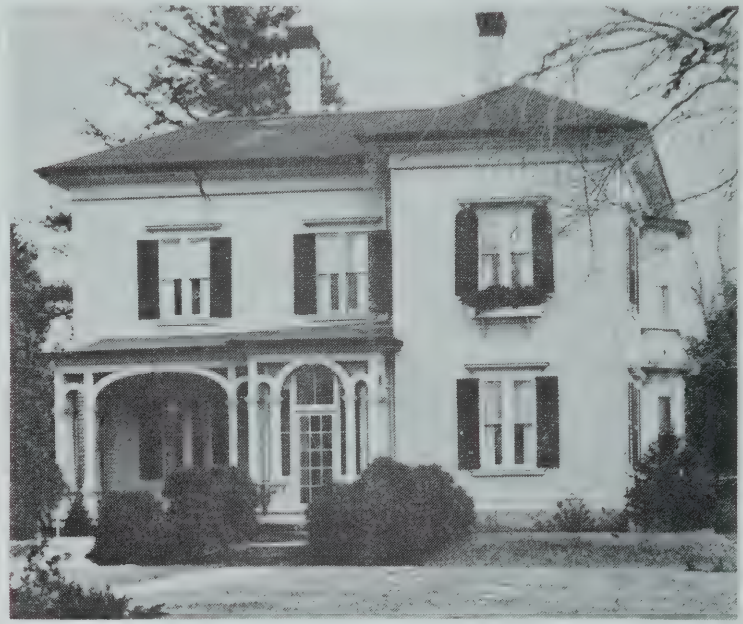
The Italianate period left a lasting impression on the face of America, particularly in public buildings of its period. But, despite its obvious virtues, it did not catch on to a notable degree in this town.

Incidently, the "Mansion House" in Lakeville, unfortunately gutted by fire last winter, was supposedly inspired by the English country manor style, but, the Italian villa was once in favor in England and the Mansion House, with its tower and roofline has a distinct Italian look. While it may have found its inspiration in England, it seems a fairly valid theory that the Italian style was somewhere in the background.

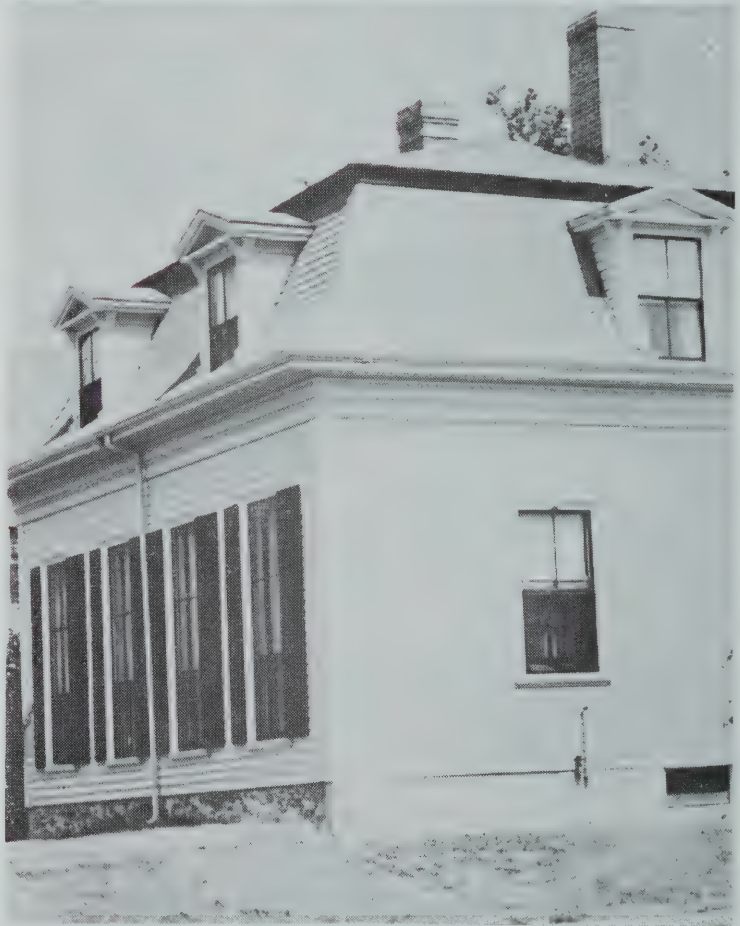
When one begins to interpret history in these terms, Middleboro is in fact one vast museum and its streets miles of corridors leading to many interesting byways.

For example, there is a house at 3 High Street worthy of speculation. Under its eaves there is an exact replica of the wooden edging used on English Tudor houses many years ago and called "vergeboard" or "bargeboard."

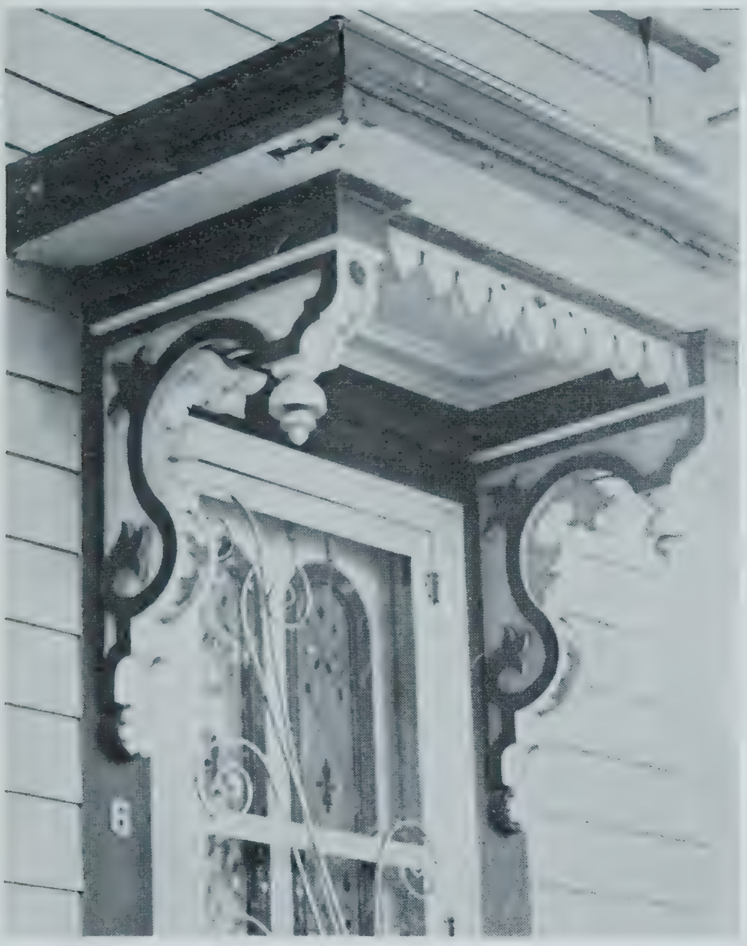
The curious student of history might ascertain the meaning of these terms but probably would encounter difficulty in attempting to determine what inspired its appearance on a house in Middleboro. We can assume, however, that many of these European variations in building may have been noted and approved by Americans on trips abroad.



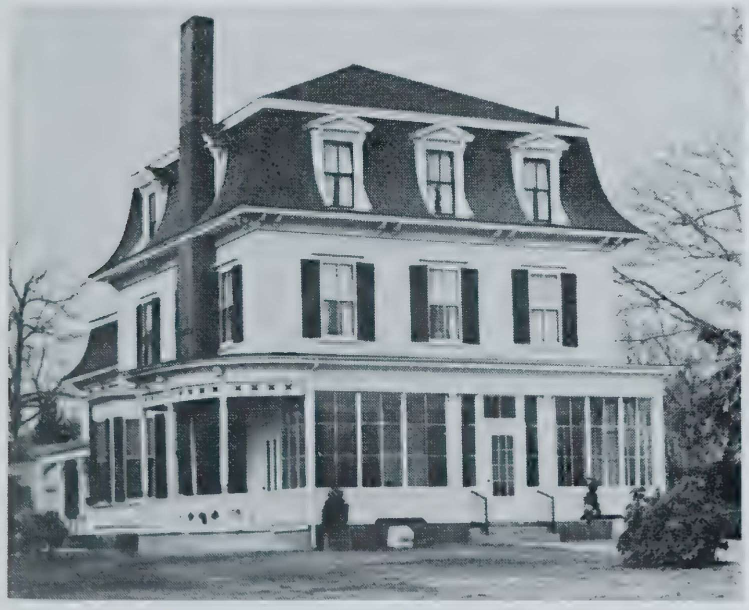
South Main Street is an avenue of architectural history and its infinite variety; including at 120 South Main an excellent example of the Italian villa influence. This basically uncluttered design spread throughout Europe and to England and is strikingly similar to the austerity of the so-called "modern" style.



Although commonly employed to give added prestige and a useable third floor to a two-story building, the Mansard roof sits well on a less pretentious structure, as shown at 31 Oak Street; the front windows here being another evidence of "gracious living" in an earlier era.



Sometimes called the Victorian or Gingerbread style, the above is a local example of ornamentation applied to function. Middleboro has, as an old New England town, many examples of this flamboyant period which, although sometimes held in ridicule, is again coming into favor with collectors of "Americana."



The impressive facade of a dwelling built to incorporate the practical and eye-appealing lines of the Mansard roof is pictured at 87 South Main Street. Of French origin, the Mansard roof enjoyed a boom here in both public and private construction.

So far ranging are the architectural "in-betweens" in Middleboro, one might make a fascinating hobby of tracking them down with a camera and recording them for some future generation.

We have not intentionally overlooked the Victorian era as seen here, and the ornamental home embellishments called "Gingerbread." Both are interrelated and abound in Middleboro as in many New England towns of early vintage.

These, in their fanciful curliques and sometimes overly ornamental extremes, have been condemned as vestiges of an era of "bad" taste. But the resurgent interest in things "Victorian," evident at any country auction and in the numerous antique shops, give the lie to the permanence of opinion. It is therefore inadvisable to sell the "In-betweens" short. They had much of merit and rightfully belong in the totality of history.

MIDDLEBORO'S FIRST BOTTLING WORKS.

By Lyman Butler

In an earlier edition of the Antiquarian it was mentioned that the Nemasket Spring Bottling Works started on Jackson Street. This is not correct. The Middleboro Bottling Works was located on Jackson Street on the site of the new parking lot in the rear of the police station. This plant was operated by Bartlett Perkins at that time.

The Nemasket Springs started in a small building in the rear of the present plant in Warrentown in 1921. This was not the first bottling works, though as I remember when I was very young that there was a very small building located some distance back from the original Nemasket Spring building. A man named Rodman Robinson operated this bottling works at the time. I cannot recall the name it went under, but possibly this was the original Middleboro Bottling Works. At that time the carbonated water was mixed by turning a crank and all labels and caps were put on by hand.

I spent quite a lot of time around the place as my older brother used to work there at times labeling bottles etc. and of course I was always ready for a drink when a bottle came through defective.

About the original Nemasket Spring on the land owned by a Mr. Garabed Kayajan, who ran a large dairy farm (Sunny side Farm), where several springs including the one where the first shop was located. Several hundred feet nearer to the road there was a much larger spring. This water was very cold and clear and Mr. Kayajan used to put cases of milk in this spring over night as it was as cold as any refrigerator at that time. I know that as kids we used to wade in the overflow and believe me we did not stay in long.

Mr. Kayajan, realizing the possibilities of the soft drink business, decided to utilize the water that nature had made available. Tests proved that the water was very pure and the mineral content very high, and in addition to making fine soda the water, was in great demand for drinking. Many times the delivery truck would have nearly as many carboys of water as cases of soda.

The first building erected in 1921, was a small wooden two story structure possibly 30 ft. square. Upstairs the syrup was made and piped down to the bottling machine, and spare bottles were stored here. The bottling machine was still operated by hand very much like the first ones. The carbonated water was mixed by a machine at this time.

I had the privilege of bottling part of the first case of soda made there. Samuel and Moush Kayajan were the proprietors of the new company at the start. The business grew quite rapidly and when fire destroyed part of the old Kayajan home a short time later, a large ell was saved and this was moved to the bottling works to be used for storage. At first the bottles were washed at the farm along with the dairy bottles, but before long there were so many that a washer had to be installed.

A few years later the present plant was built and it is operated by Haig and Armen Kayajan at present. The company has grown to be one of the largest and best equipped plants in this section of Massachusetts and the same spring water is still used in all beverages.

CAPE COD FOLK

Cape Cod people are just like other people. And Cape Cod people are not like other people. Like Bostonians, their speech can be identified by those keen to detect the speech of different sections of the country. This is true even on the telephone.

During World War II when citizens from all parts of the United States were drawn to its Capitol for one reason or another, a young lady had occasion to talk with a department head in a certain bureau. Finally, one day, the man said, "Where are you from?" She replied, "Massachusetts." "What part?" "The Cape." "Which Cape?" "Cape Cod." Said he, "I thought so." "What made you think so?" "The way you talk." It developed both were from Massachusetts of almost adjoining towns. The young lady said she could see that she talked vastly different from a Southerner, for instance, but it was hard to realize her speech was so typically "Cape Cod" but through the years she has learned it is true. No unnecessary words are wasted. As the above instance shows, both were very concise.

There is a way of looking at Life that is typically Cape Cod and that, — like the manner of expression, lasts through life. People may wander far and wide, yet their ingrained outlook remains practically the same.

While, for years, in many ways Cape Cod was isolated, due to several contributing circumstances, yet many of its people were more widely traveled than many with so-called "advantages" are to-day. All the way from sea Captains, (many sailing their own ships), down the line, from mates, sailors "before the mast," cabin boys and cooks these people had traveled all over the world. Could this be without a wide first hand education? Certainly not, and while these men (and in many instances Captains were accompanied by their wives on long voyages) were visiting the far corners of the earth, their families were busy at home, awaiting their return.

The stay-at-homes ran the affairs of the towns, raised the staple vegetables, dug clams, quahaugs, fished and carried on the every day tasks. This was no small matter. In those days people knew of no such piece of equipment as a "deep-freezer." Vegetables were raised in quantities to last through the New England winters until the season rounded again. Nearly every old Cape Cod house has, even at the present day, its "Vegetable Cellar." Wise people, when renovating these old houses have left these cellars intact. They are invaluable for many things. In addition to the bins for potatoes, apples, and turnips, these old cellars had a corner set off and braced with boards where the beets and carrots, as well as various bulbs for the flower garden, were buried in nice clean white pond sand. These vegetables could be dug out way into the spring and would be crisp and clean for use. In addition to these labors the care of stock involved additional tasks, for sheep were raised for their wool and meat. Hogs kept for lard and food and in many instances cattle kept for beef as well as milk.

When the seafarers returned to Cape Cod what a rejoicing on both sides and what an event to anticipate. On the one hand the gifts and stories to be looked forward to, and on the other, the welcome and the wonderful home cooked food. Something looked forward to from both angles of living.

Before the days of automobiles each little hamlet was pretty well set off by itself. A trip, say from Falmouth to Brockton would take two days, that is for a leisurely drive. Of course, were one in haste, matters would be arranged differently. This is not considering the journey by rail. Such visits were considered an event. Something to be anticipated for weeks, possibly months. It is difficult for the present day young people to realize this when a 50 mile trip for an evening's pleasure is a matter of course.

Courting was just as much enjoyed going home from a husking-bee or a dance, in a buggy, as it is to-day in a sport coupe returning from the "movie."

A real "Cape Codder" is not given to being loquacious. On the contrary. A real native can express more by his silence than many an orator could convey in an impassioned effort.

Children early sense this. They can be made more uncomfortable by a well expressed silence by an adept parent than by a good old-fashioned spanking.

The stories told of remarks made by those whose sentences were brief but pithy are many. Could they be recalled and recorded they would be both illuminating and interesting.

There was the old gentleman who sent his son to divinity school, and raised huge crops of potatoes to pay the tuition. When the day came for the young man to preach his first sermon to his relatives and neighbors naturally it was expected the old gentleman would be present and in the front seat. The church was well filled and last among those to come was the father. It was summer and doors and windows were open. The old gentleman sat on the front steps and listened. The first ones to leave the service asked him how he liked his son's sermon. The old man's only reply to their query was, "I've lost all my potaters." As the years passed his remark was well remembered by his contemporaries—many always agreed that he did lose the "potaters."

While attending school the above same young man having been requested by his father to do necessary hoeing began to quote Latin. It made no impression on his Dad who told him, "If you don't get out and hoe those potatobus I'll break your lazy backabus."

The toil, the rigor of the winters and the lack of fertility in the soil sometimes engendered crafty traits. Caused secrecy where it was not necessary. To this day some natures are such that if they find say, a good huckleberry patch, they are as secretive as many a man with a business deal involving large sums of money.

Some years ago a couple of girls were picking berries in a swamp and kept hearing someone near at hand. The girls had an idea who was near but saw no one. They started homeward and seeing a nice bush close by stopped to pick it. The girls made no secret of their presence, but the other couple, both laden with filled pails, did not even see them, so intent were they on making a get-a-way without divulging the source of their harvest. The girls saw right where they emerged but never took advantage of their knowledge.

Going to church meant a great deal — what would most girls think to-day of walking three or four miles in a dusty road to attend? Yet they did then. Even walking in their old shoes, with skirts held high — until they came to a wall or other hiding place where they could change the shoes to their "best ones" and proceed in dignity the rest of the way.

In certain sections of the Cape there were the Camp Meetings. Many serious, dignified people followed these and always seemed to derive much spiritual satisfaction from them. They were held in succession in different localities, i.e., Rock, West Wareham (usually spoken of as Tremont Camp meeting), Marion and Yarmouth, during the months of July and August. During the sessions those coming from a distance lived in tents, ate in a large communal dining-room and the services were held out-of-doors, the pulpit being constructed of ordinary boards and the congregation being seated on plain board seats, unless in event of a storm, when a large tent was used to accomodate them.

However, notwithstanding that he has usually obtained his livelihood the "hard way" the true Cape Codder is kind. Let a neighbor be in trouble he knows as soon as his friends find it out they will rally to his assistance, as he, in his turn, would to theirs. This characteristic is shown in the event of sickness or death.

In the olden days a registered nurse was an unheard of person. In sickness relatives and friends rallied to the aid of the stricken family, and in almost all communities there were those, both men and women, who were looked to in the emergency of death. They reverently and carefully prepared the body awaiting the coming of the undertaker. It must be remembered that an undertaker would probably be at least five miles away — there were no telephones and he probably could not be notified until many hours after death.

A funeral was an all day affair which can only be imagined by present day standards. Picture the hearse — for many years only black was used. The undertaker and his driver, both wearing tall silk hats, driving the span of matching blacks, in their silver harnesses. The journey to the cemetery was made decorously, the horses walking the whole distance.

In the early day of the ambulance and mobile-hearse some persons were not reconciled to such a hasty transit from the place of last rites to the cemetery and instances are known where requests were made that after their passing they be transported in the old hearse with the horses. They did not relish the idea of being hurried to their graves. Fortunately they were unaware of how this last ride was taken.

Often in winter the country roads were in deplorable condition. In one out-of-the-way village years ago the mud was almost hub deep but that would not deter some from attending the funeral services of a certain well known man. A relative got as far as she could with her own carriage. She weighed close to 250 pounds and was a very well dressed dignified person. The first conveyance that appeared going in her direction was an old fashioned hen-cart. Nothing daunted, the lady requested a ride. The driver assented, helped her on board and in due course she arrived at the funeral service majestically seated beside him. (History does not reveal how she made the return journey.)

The tin-cart, the ladder wagon, the hen-cart, the molasses wagon and the straw-cart! Not to mention the "pack-peddler." I wonder how many living to-day can recall these and realize what they meant to the rural communities.

The tin-cart and ladder wagon were just what the names signify. The hen-cart came around and picked up the old hens and surplus roosters for market. The molasses wagon! Ah! Picture what this meant to the small boys, running along in back of it in the summer time — kicking up the dusty road with their bare feet, catching up to it and making the most of their opportunity to catch every drop of the fluid. This performance was quite disgusting to older sisters, and younger ones, too, and many were the sarcastic remarks made. No one ever heard of a boy being ill from this practice.

The straw cart. This was driven from the straw factory to various comunities where their women "sewed straw." They wove it beautifully and made lovely hats, using moulds to shape them. These were picked up by the straw cart and new material left at the homes for the women to sew.

Cape people are renowned for their initiative. They are self-reliant and intrepid, mostly resenting undue interference.

Years ago a three year old boy went across the Acushnet River in a wooden wash tub, paddling himself all the way. His mother met him on the other side and administered a good spanking. This boy showed his inborn independence which was demonstrated all through his life. Probably his mother's fright and stern sense of obedience outweighed any concern she might have had for the safety of his person. At sixteen he told her he was "going to sea" and if she did not give consent he was going anyway. She gave her consent but she did make the Captain promise he would bring the boy home. Somewhere, at a point in the Indian Ocean, the boy ran away but the Captain located him and got him back on the ship and then told him about his mother and his promise to her, i.e., that he would bring him home, "and he was going to" and he did. The mother's side of this story is that the boy's father was lost in the Gulf Stream a few days out from New Bedford, when the boy was a little less than three years old. Seafaring was the principal vocation of her family and her husband's and it was no wonder the child had this intrepid spirit. Generations of Cape Codders exhibited the same quality.

There is another quality or characteristic of these people, and that is individualism. This could be illustrated by many anecdotes.

They are also loyal. Human nature is often a contradiction and it is nowhere demonstrated any better than among the people of the Cape. They can and do feud it among themselves, but just let an outsider try to straighten out matters, and immediately they stand together. This is exemplified in church affairs. No more bitter quarrels have been waged than there. Many are the tales of downright cussedness. There is one church that was dubbed "Battle Hill" and it was considered the hottest place in summer and the coldest in winter but it was considered to have no lack of heat at any time of the year. To-day the majority of these people lie side by side very near the scenes of their disputes and disagreements. In these communities, long ago, nearly all were kin to each other and it can be realized a lot of the "feuding" was really family jealousy but it is long forgotten by their descendents.

Ministers, being only human, had their trials and tribulations. One time, following a quarrel in his church, and the young man, knowing he was soon to go to new fields, and perhaps not having the discretion he would later, in the course of his farewell discourse, told his congregation that when he came they nearly ate him up and "now they wish they had."

In the olden days, as now, there were always those of unsteady character but in the small communities where everyone knew everybody, allowances were made for these individuals.

The integrity of the Cape Codders is notorious. "A man's word is as good as his bond" was an attribute proudly cherished and indignantly resented if doubted.

To know these people well is a privilege, and they, once their friendliness is obtained, are generous in their return of affection.

By

Susan B. Brackett

ROCK CEMETERY

(A paper written by Mrs. Ernest E. Thomas and presented at a meeting of the Historical Association about twenty-five years ago.)

Those of you who are familiar with the Rock Cemetery know it lies on Highland Street, just beyond Rock Village. It is on both sides of the road, and is really a collection of five distinct cemetery lots. That on the right is usually called "Hope's Rest" — not, as you might think, because of the many hopes buried there, but in memory of one Hope Tinkham Jones, whose tomb you may see beside the road. Originally there was a small rectangular cemetery, known as the "Ewer lot," for a Mr. Ewer, a minister of the Third Calvinistic Baptist church who gave the land for cemetery purposes about 1850. It ran back to a stone wall about halfway to the pine woods in the rear. Beside the Ewer lot was a family cemetery called the Thomas lot. Then on the death of Hope Jones in 1885, she was buried next to this section, and her husband deeded the strip of land at the side of the Ewer cemetery and behind it to the Third Calvinistic Baptist church, which in turn deeded it to the Rock Cemetery Association in 1907, with the provision that it be called "Hope's Rest" and the association be responsible for the care of the Jones lot and tomb.

Across the road there stands a lovely memorial chapel about on the spot where two old Baptist churches have stood, with burial grounds on either side. To the right lies the East cemetery where you may find the grave of Mr. Ewer who gave the land for the Ewer lot. Report says this was once a part of an old drill field at the end of the common before the coming of the railroad shifted the centre of the village. The best story I know about the East cemetery concerns a certain Eleazer Thomas who lived near the Rock pond. He died and was buried in the front right corner lot. Then his wife Sarah, known in the village in true Cape Cod style as Sarah Eleazer, realized she had no photograph of the deceased. She was much distressed. Finally she had the coffin dug up again, opened and propped up on the lot. The photographer did what he could; then Eleazer was buried again.

To the left of the chapel lies the oldest section of the cemetery and to me it is the most interesting. At the back of the section, beneath a grand old tree, there is one fairly new stone which always attracts me because I have such a clear memory of the old character buried there. He lived a real hermit life in a little house in the woods below the village. Whenever I saw him he looked just like a hermit should, very untidy and far from clean. But his stone which lies flat on the ground bears these words: A true sportsman and a lover of nature. I have never reconciled those words with my memory of him and I have wondered if the old fellow would recognize himself by his epitaph.

Parallel to the road runs the "Old Burying Ground" with its slabs of gray slate and thin designs and quaint verses so typical of old grave yards. And this one is old. It dates back to 1791 when the first grave there was dug for a young girl. A farmer moved from the eastern part of the town to Rock, then known as Beaver Dam. Although he had been assessed a certain sum of money toward the support of the minister at the Green, when his young daughter died, he wished her to be buried at Rock rather than at the Green. So a piece of land on the hilltop was set aside, part of it to be a burying ground and part to be the site of the church they were then hoping to build. And the first one laid to rest there was this young girl. You may find her grave near the left-hand corner of the front row, very near the road.

One of the earliest graves in the old cemetery was that of another young girl who used to live in that rather striking looking white house you may have noticed about one quarter mile down the road on the right. In its prime it must have been quite imposing. It still has a lovely front doorway, but now it looks quite pitiful because it was badly gutted by fire awhile ago. The story goes that in the early 1800's a wealthy family lived there with an only daughter whom they worshiped. But as she grew up she fell in love with a very poor young man who lived in the modest little farm house right across the road. The girl's people were furious and determined not to let her have anything to do with him. Of course she was quite upset. Then one day she disappeared. They hunted and hunted and finally found her body down in the cellar where she had drowned herself in a huge hogshead of brine kept for pickling the winter meat. I can't vouch for the truth of the story, but every time I see that tall white house still looking down its nose at the little place across the way, I find it very easy to believe.

Up and down the rows of old stones there are the makings of many tales. There's the stone of a woman, evidently long a helpless sufferer whose sweetness of character is kept in memory by the verses on her stone. There's another stone erected to a mother and in memory also of her son who wandered out to the Ohio country long before Ohio was organized as a state. There, in that far country, he was killed by Indians and mourned by his people back here in a quiet New England village. My favorite stone is that erected to an old sea captain. I love its suggestion of high adventure. Evidently he sailed the seven seas. Three times he suffered shipwreck and survived. After escaping all the perils of the sea, he died quietly on dry land and was buried in that peaceful hilltop cemetery.

When gas and tires once more are plentiful, and you can ride out as you please, I recommend a visit to the old Rock burying ground. Go there, if you can, in the late afternoon or early summer evening. You'll find much to interest you, and while you are down on your knees, straining your eyes to make out the old inscriptions, you will enjoy the way the thrushes sing at sunset time over in the pine woods behind Hope's Rest.

ACQUISITIONS

In spite of a long cold snowy Winter, with our museum buildings closed, the collections continue to grow through the generosity of our many friends and members. As has happened in the annals of historical societies and historical museums from the very beginnings of such organizations, we gingerly accepted two small ca. 1820 buildings from the Town — and now wish we had accepted five! Though we still have eight rooms to properly finish and decorate for exhibits, the storage problem grows apace with accessions. A year ago Frank Buckman sketched plans for a blacksmith shop to be built in our back garden area, but interest and volunteer help slumped back in its favorite TV chair and nothing came of the scheme. **Something** has got to give as the old saying goes.

We are indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Winthrop for a fine old oriental rug that now brightens the second parlor with its highboy, melodion and Cephas Thompson portraits. Louise B. Pratt has given the museum a fine collection of old laces. We have acquired through the thoughtfulness of Miss Amie Britton a collection of stereoptican views and a 1917 War Department document. Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Fickert have presented us with some fine old examples of plaster of paris moulds on which straw bonnets were made; these will of course fit neatly into our Bay State Straw Works exhibit in the little room off the Tom Thumb Room. We are again indebted to Dr. and Mrs. Basil Hall of Westport Point for further correspondence of the Washburn family. Some years ago the Halls entrusted to our keeping two collections of old documents, deeds, letters and memorabilia of, by and concerning Philander Washburn and his son the Hon. George H. Washburn. This new collection contains letters to Philander Washburn from well known Middleborough residents, among them Noah Perkins, Dexter Phillips and others ca. 1876-1880, as well as George H. Washburn's letters to members of his family from ca. 1862 to 1895. (*See "To the Editors of the Boston Journal," in this issue.)

Thanks to the thoughtful generosity of Mrs. Perley Warren and Mrs. Everett Collins we have acquired from the estate of Mr. Elmer Hatch of South Middleborough a collection of ancient house furnishings including chairs, kitchen utensils, old quilts and hand tools of the 19th century — all of which will fit many of our exhibits from the old kitchen to the bedroom.

The Board of Trustees of the Pratt Free School in North Middleborough are considering the presentation of the fine old portraits that have graced the walls of the auditorium for many years. (See Vol. I, #1, page 3). We will try to go ahead with plans for a proper room and wall space to encourage the Board to entrust them to our safekeeping for future generations.

Two small bon-bon dishes from the Tom Thumb Home have just been presented to the museum in memory of Mrs. Horace K. Atkins. They were purchased at the Tom Thumb auction years ago, and we are very grateful to our anonymous donor not only for these fine additions to our Tom Thumb Room, but for the tribute to the memory of one of our most valued friends and loyal workers.

Among a collection of letters to and from members of the noted Washburn family, Philander and his son, Hon. George H. Washburn, were some old newspaper clippings. The interesting collection was presented to the Association by Dr. and Mrs. Basil D. Hall of Westport Point, Massachusetts. The following is a copy of one of the clippings, apparently written by a member of the Washburn family:

Middleboro, May 6, 1872.

To the Editors of THE BOSTON JOURNAL:

The readers of THE JOURNAL seem to have been enlightened on the condition of almost every town in New England except this. Why this flower of the Old Colony has been "blushing unseen" for so long I cannot divine, but if THE JOURNAL and I agree it shall no longer be left under the leaves.

About two years ago this town celebrated its two hundredth birthday anniversary; our friends must at least then reverence our age! Indeed, we claim near kinship to Plymouth, our county town, and the landing-place of the Pilgrims. A drive through Plympton and Kingston and the grand old Plymouth woods, where the graceful deer bound over the rocks, and look at their bright eyes in the mirror-like lakes, where the mayflower (eppigia) fills the air with perfume, brings you to the far-famed old town. The romance of the drive is rather lost in the reality, however. The fact is, the great trees have been burnt down, the flowers are all out of sight, the deer have nearly all disappeared and the road really reminds one more of the Desert of Sahara than anything else; but then, after all, it is only the difference in the way of "putting it."

In the opposite direction from Middleboro lie a chain of lakes second to none in the state. They are about three miles from the center of the town, and are reached either by land or water. The longest is nine miles long. In these the Nemasket River takes its rise, and, winding through the town, empties into the Taunton River, thence goes with all the other little streams to the great ocean.

There are several large factories on this river, woolen mill, shovel factory, etc. Also, one fine water-privilege, at present not in use. This latter is situated in the most picturesque part of the town, called Nemasket Village. Here, Judge Oliver formerly had his beautiful country seat.

Here also, the Taunton "alewives," the herrings, are just now. I wish I could picture the gay scene as the water dashes in a golden stream over the fall, and the fishermen throw their nets in the white foam and bring them up full of quivering silver fishes — then hold their nets reflectively in the air a moment, then again bring them up from the water and toss out their shining treasure; but enough of the "alewives," let us go back among the stores, schools and churches which are so numerous, near by.

A new Town Hall stands just now a "castle in the air," but the foundation is waiting and the cornerstone will be laid probably this summer. Oh, if it were only built now, then our jubilee chorus singers might welcome their sister choruses in a mass rehearsal. They wished to come here as the place most easy of access in this region, but we have been obliged to return the answer — No hall large enough. We have a fine chorus of about fifty singers, who meet for practice twice a week — A. J. Pickens, leader.

Middleboro lies about half way between Boston and Newport, on the Old Colony and Newport Railroad, and is also the terminus of the Middleboro and Taunton Railroad; also on the Cape Cod. It is within one night of New York, an hour of Boston, Providence, Fall River and New Bedford.

There is more life than usual here this spring, and many new houses are being built. The academy, taught for so many years by Prof. J. W. P. Jenks (now of Brown University) has just been re-opened with Mr. Leonard, principal. We have a circulating library just opened, and have just introduced street lamps.

There are large straw works here, a steam mill, several large shoe factories etc., which employ hundreds of operatives. In some parts of the town farming is carried on to a considerable extent. The soil varies, but as a general thing it is of a kind which obliges the farmer to cut short his noonings and his pipe.

As for the enlightened condition of the inhabitants, one can get some idea of that from the fact that, besides many other papers and periodicals, about a hundred copies of THE BOSTON JOURNAL are taken here daily! That also may be supposed to speak well for the coming election!

To get the best view of Middleboro go to the hill between the Centre and the old church where Dr. Putnam was pastor so many years—the church which, by the way, Daniel Webster once remarked as one of the finest specimens of architecture in the state—go on top of this hill just at sunset one of the glorious June afternoons that are coming; see the distant hills and spires, rosy with light, the blue river winding in and out through the bright green meadows; hear the distant church bells chiming the call to evening prayer, mingling with the good-night songs of the birds and the happy voices of children—and you will be struck with the home-like beauty of our New England town.

M.E.W.

Corrections — see Vol. VII, #1.

Thanks to the friendly cooperation of Clifford K. Shipton, director of the American Antiquarian Society, we must now confess that the editor's "to the best of his knowledge" doesn't speak very well for his knowledge. The Deborah Sampson Letter we printed in the last issue HAD BEEN printed in Emory's History of Taunton. (Ed. note: however we still feel it was worth **RE**printing.)

Thanks to Richard G. Wood, director of the Vermont Historical Society, we must add to Lyman Butler's "Vermont Museums," that the Kent Museum in Calais is owned and operated by the Vermont Historical Society, and, that the Harold Rugg Collection is actually in the museum of the Society, though housed in the State Administration Building.

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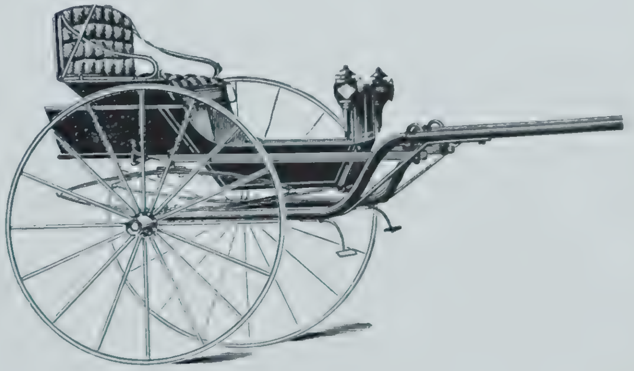
Thanks to the generous offer by several of our advertisers, their copy has been omitted from this issue in order to include a deluge of interesting contributions. We sincerely hope you meant it — our sincere thanks.



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Colonel Ebenezer Weaver Peirce

ASSONET'S PEERLESS PEIRCE

By Laurist W. Reynolds

(Former President Bridgewater Historical Society)

A simple gravestone in Assonet Burying Ground marks the last earthly resting place of Colonel Ebenezer Weaver Peirce. Its very simplicity virtually hides the story of a life of most unusual color and tragedy. As a youth I often visited my great-uncle Frank Reynolds in Assonet and with him passed by the old graveyard where the revered forefathers of this hamlet slept, and I too was then unaware of the spectacular Civil War record of Colonel Peirce. It is appropriate that we now be reminded of his service in the armed forces as it was exactly one hundred years ago that he was honorably discharged from the Union army for disabilities incurred in the performance of his duties.

My interest and curiosity concerning the Colonel was first aroused when I found and read a copy of the Middleboro Gazette of Friday, March 11, 1927. Under the 50 Years Ago items a unique funeral was described and it was worded thus: "The black horse that General E. W. Peirce rode in the battlefields of Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky, and East Tennessee in the late war died at the home of its owner Feb. 22, 1877, and the next day in a pine box, made expressly for the purpose, was buried in the Peirce family lot in the cemetery. Great pains were taken to place the body in a life-like position in the box, and it looked as if lying in a clean bed of straw indulging in a quiet sleep. Over all was thrown the flag of the Union that the old horse, for three years, suffered almost everything but death to maintain. The grave was walled up and covered with flagging stones. The horse was a familiar figure to many old-time Middleboro folks and was driven to Middleboro and back to Assonet on the Friday before its death."

A perusal of this article is enough to stimulate the notion that here must have been a remarkably rare man, intense and dedicated. For years I collected scraps of information about him until recently when I went all out to uncover the complete story of Colonel Peirce and particularly the details concerning his military service.

Ebenezer was born in the late afternoon of Friday, April 5, 1822 in the Peirce residence, a little south of the stone bridge and on the easterly side of South Main Street in Assonet. This house, built about 1748, was rich in Colonial history before and during the American Revolution. His father was also Ebenezer Peirce, a descendant of Abraham Peirce, and his mother, Joanna Weaver, was the daughter of Colonel Benjamin Weaver of Freetown.

The Colonel spent his childhood in the South Main Street house and later inherited the north part from his father and acquired the other half by purchase. He attended one term at Peirce Academy in Middleboro and continued his studies at Bacon Academy in Colchester, Conn., and at the Durham Academy in Durham, N. H. His service in public capacities was boundless. He was Collector of Taxes and Treasurer of Freetown, Overseer of the Poor in Lakeville, School Committeeman, auditor and moderator, Collector of town and school district taxes, Coroner for Bristol County, Coroner for Plymouth County, Justice of the Peace, Notary Public, Public Administrator, Prover of firearms, etc.

Colonel Peirce spent much of his spare time collecting and recording material for his books. He did this before the Civil War and with great difficulty he continued after his return from Army service. He was the author of "The Peirce Family of the Old Colony," "Contributions—Biographical, Genealogical, and Historical," "Indian History and Genealogy," "History of Middleboro"—(in Hurd's History of Plymouth County), and in (Directory of Middleboro), "Brief Sketches of Towns in Plymouth and Bristol Counties," "Military History of Massachusetts," and articles in the Taunton Gazette.

He was a member of the Pilgrim Society, New England Historic and Genealogical Society, and the Old Colony Historical Society. His Civil War uniform coat, sword, sash, and belt can be seen in the museum of the Old Colony Historical Society, also an original manuscript entitled "Massacre of Taunton Citizens in King Philip's War."

The Colonel saw considerable service in the local militia of Massachusetts. In turn he was commissioned by Gov. George Briggs to be Quartermaster, Major, and Lt.-Colonel of the 4th regiment of artillery. Later he became Captain of the Assonet Light Infantry Company, Major of the 3rd Infantry, Lt.-Colonel of the 3rd, and Brigadier-General of the Second Brigade in the first Division of Mass. Volunteer Militia, 1855.

Colonel Peirce was the first man of any rank or condition who made a formal tender to Governor Andrew for service in the Civil War, offering to do duty as an officer or private soldier, as His Excellency should deem proper to employ him.

In April 1861 he responded to President Lincoln's call for troops and served on the staff of General B. F. Butler M.V.M. This brigade was detailed by the Secretary of War to serve in Virginia and performed admirably until the three months term of the troops expired. Peirce, who was a Brigadier General then in the Mass. Volunteer Militia, commanded the Union troops at Big Bethel, Virginia, on June 10, 1861. This was the first real battle of the war.

In October 1861, Henry B. Wheelwright of Taunton received permission from Governor Andrew to raise a company of infantry. On November 2nd the infantry raised by Wheelwright was placed in charge of Corp. Willard Tripp and sent to Assonet to be merged with Brig.-Gen. Peirce's company. While the troops were in Assonet they were quartered in the old "Post Office" in Peirce's Hall. The food was cooked in the basement. This building was erected about 1814. Peirce's Hall was on the second floor of the building and for years was used for social, political, and military gatherings. The building was demolished in 1934.

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On December 13, 1861 the 29th Regiment was organized and Peirce was made Colonel. Three of the companies were from Boston, one from Charlestown, and one each from Lynn, Sandwich, Bridgewater, Plymouth, Taunton, and Pawtucket. This Regiment was sent to Newport News, Va.

In May 1862 Colonel Peirce with his regiment took part in the expedition to Norfolk and Suffolk, Va. After the fall of Norfolk on May 10th to the Union forces under General John Wool, the crew of the Confederate gunboat Virginia (Merrimac) scuttled their ship. River pilots had advised them that the iron-clad vessel could not navigate the treacherous channel up the James River to Richmond. Loss of the Virginia opened the river to Federal gunboats.

In July 1861 the untrained Union Army of the Potomac suffered disaster at Manassas (Bull Run) in the first attempt to drive into Virginia and capture Richmond. President Lincoln then appointed Gen. George B. McClellan the new commander of the demoralized army. By the spring of 1862 he had brought order and discipline and the army was ready for the supreme test—the goal was Richmond.

Instead of marching overland, McClellan decided to take advantage of Union control of the inland waters and transport his army with its vast supply and materiels down the Potomac River and across Chesapeake Bay to the tip of the peninsula between the York and James Rivers. Then, with his supply ships steaming up the York, he planned to march northwestward up the peninsula, join another force under Gen. Irvin McDowell marching overland from Washington, and together converge on Richmond.

After landing at Fortress Monroe the Federal troops pushed aside the thinly held Confederate defenses at Yorktown and Williamsburg and proceeded up the peninsula according to plan. Progress was slow but McClellan at last cleared the way to his next objective, the landing at White House on the Pamunkey River, a tributary of the York. Here the railroad crossed the Pamunkey on its way to Richmond. This would be the Union base of supply for the contemplated attack on Richmond. It was here at White House Landing that Colonel Peirce and his regiment joined the Army of the Potomac in June 1862 and was attached to Meagher's Irish Brigade, Richardson's Division of Sumner's Corps.

On June 25th the Seven Days of Retreat began for the Union troops when General Lee wrested the initiative from McClellan with vigorous flanking movements. Meagher's brigade was at the battle of Gaine's Mill and at Savage Station principally to cover the retreat of the Union forces. McClellan was now engaged in the most difficult move an army can be called upon to make in the face of an aggressive enemy—a flanking movement to effect a change of base. No thought was now given to any offensive movement but only to save the army. McClellan had decided not to fall back on White House but headed for Harrison's Landing on the James River.

By the 29th of June as soon as General Lee was certain of the direction of McClellan's retreat, he ordered Longstreet and A. P. Hill to cross the Chickahominy River by New Bridge and to move down the peninsula by the Central Road; Magruder and Huger were to move by the Charles City Road, thus taking the Federal army on the flank; and Stonewall Jackson at a later hour was to cross by the Grapevine Bridge, and move down near the right bank of the Chickahominy, thus threatening the rear.

White Oak Creek had its source about midway between the James River and the Chickahominy and near where the Richmond and York railroad passed on its course from White House to Richmond. The creek gradually veered over a course of thirteen miles and emptied into the Chickahominy which in turn joined the York River. It was bordered by a swamp. For five miles the stream had some volume and the swamp was from three to four hundred yards wide; its breadth is far greater in the area between Savage's Station and Fraser's Farm (Glendale). Southward, toward the James, the ground rises slowly, and becomes a dry flat but with swamps along the sluggish streams, covered with scrubby forests, with here and there a clearing. Three roads starting at Richmond, spread out like the sticks of a fan, and unite half-way between the swamp and Malvern Hill where McClellan directed his retreat en route to Harrison's Landing. Just skirting the swamp is the Charles City Road, then the Central or Darbeytown Road, and then the Newmarket Road. It was by these roads that Longstreet and A. P. Hill marched to their attack on the retreating Union columns.

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McClellan's retreat was in the following order: at noon on the 28th of June, Keyeo, who lay nearest, crossed White Oak creek and with his troops and trams reached the James on the 30th. Franklin and Porter followed by the same route, and were over on the 29th. At daybreak of this day Heint Zelman and Sumner evacuated their works in front, falling back toward Savage's Station, which they were to hold until night and then cross the swamps. A part of these corps were to keep a line of battle fronting toward the creek to check pursuit from the rear, while others were to take positions across the three roads, and so fronting toward Richmond, in order to protect the trains passing behind them from assault in flank. Late in the afternoon of June 29th Sumner and Heint Zelman had fallen back nearly to Savage's Station from the front and the right. They had been ordered to hold this point until nightfall, the positions of each being assigned to them by McClellan. Heint Zelman abandoned his position before the time and crossed the swamp by the upper road. Confederate General Magruder at length came in sight of Sumner's corps and at about 5:30 o'clock opened a sharp attack

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with artillery and supported it by infantry. The action continued hot for more than two hours, when, darkness coming on, the firing ceased. Magruder brought into action only McLaw's two brigades numbering 2500 men. His entire loss was 400 and the Union loss was considerably larger. Richardson's division in this action, consisting of the brigades of Meagher, Caldwell and French, was posted in an open field north of the railroad tracks and in back of the station. Sedgwick's division held the center in another open field south of the tracks with its left resting on the Williamsburg Road. General W. F. Smith's Division of Franklin's corps took position in the woods south of the Williamsburg road. Sumner's stand had effected its object of delaying the enemy and before midnight his force was on its way to White Oak Swamp. Lee had counted on Jackson for cooperation in this action but he was delayed by the necessity of rebuilding Grapevine bridge in order to cross the Chickahominy. General Lee now ordered Magruder to follow Longstreet and A. P. Hill down the Darbeytown Road. The next day, June 30, Longstreet and Hill came upon the Union troops of McCall and Kearney across the Long Bridge road about one mile west of the Charles City road intersection at Fraser's Farm (Glendale). Hooker held the left or south flank with Slocum on the right guarding the Charles City Road approach. Sedgwick was in the rear in reserve. Longstreet and Hill halted and waited for Huger, coming down the Charles City Road, and Jackson, supposedly coming in on the Federal rear from White Oak Swamp.

Huger was delayed by obstructions, mostly felled trees, with which the Federals had blocked his path. He did not get to Glendale in time to participate in the engagement.

About four o'clock that afternoon, however, Longstreet heard artillery firing from Huger's direction which was supposed to indicate his approach, and expecting Jackson's appearance momentarily, he opened with one of his batteries and thus brought on the battle. Jackson had approached without the knowledge of Richardson and Smith and opened with a deadly fire. Richardson immediately ordered the Irish Brigade forward to support batteries placed in positions on the crest of a little hill at the left of Nelson's house. Captain Pettit's famous battery was brought into position to halt the crossing of the creek. The fight was particularly vicious with many pockets of hand-to-hand combat.

When two German regiments from New York ran at the first fire the 29th Mass. infantry under Colonel Peirce was selected by General Richardson to go to that part of the line that the Dutchmen had vacated. They were badly cut up getting into position. Colonel Peirce's right arm was torn off by a cannonball thrown by a rebel battery. This ball after taking off his arm cut in twain a soldier of his regiment just above the hips. Peirce's wound was hastily dressed but under such a deadly fire that he had to be taken out of direct range. The attending field surgeon was assisted by Dr. Geo. B. Coggswell of North Easton, Mass., then assistant surgeon of the 29th regiment. Later he was named surgeon and became known as the fighting doctor of the Army of the Potomac. Due to a hasty retreat Colonel Peirce with other wounded soldiers was left on the field of battle to perish or be captured. Stupefied with chloroform and benumbing drugs he slept for a time oblivious to the horror of the situation. Awakening at about midnight, faint and feverish he found himself in a field vacated by the Union forces. With a great display of physical exertion and rare determination he was able to make his way back to the Union lines before his collapse.

The valorous and resolute stand of Richardson and Smith held Jackson north of White Oak Swamp and he did not reach Glendale until the next day. Without the expected support of Huger and Jackson, Longstreet could not break the Union lines in time to inflict any serious damage or to interrupt the withdrawal. At Malvern Hill on July 1st McClellan inflicted heavy losses to Lee's Confederates but during the night he continued to withdraw and the next day found the Army of the Potomac safe at Harrison's Landing under the protection of the Federal gunboats on the James.

Colonel Peirce returned to his home in Assonet on the 17th of July and was put on recruiting service in Boston on Aug. 2, 1862. He returned to his regiment at Aquia Creek in Virginia on the 28th day of August and went with them to the second Battle of Bull Run. On October 8th he was at Harper's Ferry and on Nov. 19th he returned to recruiting service in Massachusetts. He rejoined his regiment on March 21, 1863 at Newport News. His health made it necessary for him to return to recruiting on April 26, 1863 and he remained there until August 29th.

On September 1, 1863 the regiment was sent to Paris, Bourbon County, Kentucky. Colonel Peirce not only was post commander but commander of the troops there stationed of which the regiment of Colonel (afterward General) Curtin of Pennsylvania formed a part. This regiment with a battery from Indiana, a detachment of Kentucky cavalry, part of a regiment of Ohio infantry under Major Young, and Colonel Reed's mounted scouts, formed the Second Brigade of the First Division of the Ninth Army Corps. Peirce remained here until March 1864. While here on this service Lt. Wm. B. Pippy of Boston was Aide-de-Camp.

In early 1864 the Civil War lay heavily on both the North and the South. For more than three years the two antagonists had struggled to determine the fate of the Union. Strategically and numerically the Northern armies were in a stronger position than the Confederate military forces. All that seemed to be needed to end the war was an able Union commander who could marshal the mighty resources of his country for a last tremendous blow at the South. Such a man was found in General U. S. Grant, the victor at Vicksburg and Chattanooga, who was made Commander-in-chief of all the Union armies on March 9, 1864.

Failing to destroy the Army of Northern Virginia in the Battle of the Wilderness and at Spotsylvania Court House, Grant moved the Army of the Potomac to the east of Richmond. On May 29th Colonel Peirce and his re-enlisted regiment arrived at Cold Harbor, Virginia, in time to take part in the battle on June 3rd. Here Grant ordered a direct frontal assault and was repulsed with heavy losses. Failing at Cold Harbor Grant decided to turn quickly to the south of Richmond and isolate the city and the defending troops by cutting the railroads which supplied it. To do this he would need to attack Petersburg. On June 14th after a conference with General Butler the orders were given for the attack.

In the spring of 1864 Colonel Peirce's command consisted of the Third Maryland, 21st and 29th Mass., 100th Pennsylvania, and part of a regiment from Wisconsin. For a time also it had a heavy artillery regiment from New York and one from Pennsylvania. It held that part of the Union line at Petersburg in which was located an earth work known as "Fort Hill" (Fort Sedgwick). Fort Sedgwick was given this nickname because of the heavy Confederate artillery fire which was concentrated there when the fort was begun. After the seige of Petersburg it became a matter of time as to the length of the life of the Confederacy.

Colonel Peirce was constantly plagued by the loss of his arm and he frequently found it necessary to take sick leave. At last, on November 8, 1864, with the end of the war in view, he was honorably mustered out of the service.

After his return to Assonet he travelled and speculated in real estate at which he was unsuccessful. He also spent much time, though handicapped, at writing historical and genealogical records which included some of the details of his Civil War Service. In August 1866 he was appointed by President Andrew Johnson to be Collector of Internal Revenue for the First Congressional District of Mass. He entered the duties of office on Sept. 1, 1966.

The Colonel possessed an active, candid, and interesting mind and an individual point of view but his life was an unhappy one. When he returned to Assonet, following his war service, he alienated his friends and fellow townsmen, who did not con-

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done the treatment of his first wife, Irene A. Payne, who obtained a divorce in 1875. The village ostracised his second wife, Ida Gardiner; it pitied and avoided the Colonel. He became a recluse even before illness confined him to his room. He died in the same house where he was born, in 1902.

In retrospect and in viewing the life of the Colonel from afar, and despite his post war conduct, I would like to remember him for his contributions. His historical, biographical and genealogical writings are an accurate and extensive record of Freetown folks. His Civil War service is a story of dedication and sacrifice. The injuries he sustained distorted not only his physical health but probably his mental attitudes. These scars he carried for the remainder of his life. Unfortunately the Colonel's family and friends also suffered, and there was great unhappiness.

During the marriage of Ebenezer and Irene one happy event occurred with the birth of a son named Palo Alto. He survived to outlive the unhappiness, married, and had two sons and a daughter of his own. There were born thirteen great grandchildren, thirty great-great grandchildren, and great-great-great grandchildren have begun to appear. Many of these I have met and find them healthy, happy Americans, cognizant and respectful of their ancestry. May God continue to bless the descendants of Ebenezer and Irene through all future ages.

Editor's Note:

It is interesting to realize that Thomas S. Peirce, whose fantastic will you may read in this issue, thought highly enough of both Ebenezer W. Peirce and his Son Palo Alto to remember them both with bequests of $5,000. each. Peerless indeed the group of men and women Thomas S. Peirce considered worthy of his help and support.

THE WILL OF THOMAS S. PEIRCE

A gift of half a million dollars to the Town of Middleboro.

This exceptional nest egg, from which the town of Middleboro has benefited for more than half a century, was left to the town in a most unusual will. The foundation of the fortune was laid in the early 19th century when Colonel Peter H. Peirce established his country store on North Main street, the P. H. Peirce Grocery Store, a general country store where crockery, dry goods, grain, molasses and New England rum were included in the stock in trade.

Colonel Peirce was the father of ten children. A son, Thomas S. Peirce, was the last surviving member. He died in 1901. The content of his will was a surprise to the townspeople. There were bequests to relatives of more than $100,000, but the bulk of the estate, $500,000, was left for the town, with $50,000 specifically set aside for a public library and $50,000 more for a permanent fund to buy books and periodicals for the library.

Mr. Chester E. Weston was a close friend and adviser to Mr. Peirce, and when the time came to dispose of his worldly goods, having disposed of the private bequests, Mr. Peirce asked, "How much money have I left?"

"About a half a million."

"Where did it come from?" asked Mr. Peirce.

"Well," replied Mr. Weston, "your father got the nucleus of his fortune by selling rum and taking mortgages in farms and lands to secure debts. Why isn't it a good idea to leave the rest and residue of your estate so that the descendants of these people, together with others, shall have the benefit of the income?"

Mr. Peirce agreed, but he stipulated the bequest should be so set up that the town should not have any control of the fund, but that it be entirely managed and expended by three trustees whom he chose, men of principle and wisdom who reflected Mr. Peirce's own ideas. The original trustees were, Chester E. Weston, George W. Stetson and George R. Sampson. Death has brought changes to the Board and at present the trustees are Fletcher Clerk, Jr., Frederick S. Weston and Joseph W. Whitcomb.

During the more than fifty years since it was established, the fund has brought great benefits to the town, including new roads, a playground, school buildings, establishment of a commercial course in the High School, a new fire station, aid in remodeling the old Peirce store into a police station and court house, helping to pay for many improvements such as sewer extensions and at various times assuming the payment of notes owed by the town, which affected the tax rate beneficially. These are only a few of the benefits the town has enjoyed from this unusual bequest. Thomas S. Peirce loved his native place and because of his wisdom and foresight in setting aside this princely sum for its benefit, the town will continue to enjoy his beneficence for generations to come.

M. E. W.

Be it remembered, that I, Thomas S. Peirce, of Middleborough, in the County of Plymouth and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, being of sound and disposing mind and memory, do hereby make, publish and declare this my last will and testament, hereby revoking any and all wills at any time heretofore made by me.

I hereby constitute and appoint Chester E. Weston, of said Middleborough, sole executor of this my last will and testament, and hereby request that he be exempt from giving any surety or sureties on his official bond.

After the payment of my just debts, funeral charges and expense of a suitable monument at my grave, I give and bequeath as follows, viz:—

To Edward F. Wood of said Middleborough the sum of five thousand dollars ($5000).

To Levi P. Thatcher, of said Middleborough, the sum of five thousand dollars ($5000).

To Palo Alto Peirce, of Freetown, the sum of five thousand dollars ($5000).

To the three children of Nathan King, of said Middleborough, the sum of five thousand dollars ($5000) each.

To Lucy Ann King, daughter of Dr. Arad Thompson, deceased, the sum of five thousand dollars ($5000).

To the three sons of Job P. Nelson, deceased, Thomas M., Abiel W. and Sidney T. the sum of five thousand dollars ($5000) each.

To Henry Sproat's daughter, Eleanor B. Sproat, of Providence, the sum of five thousand dollars ($5000).

To Mary E. Baker, daughter of Sidney Tucker, of said Middleborough, the sum of five thousand dollars ($5000).

To the two sons of William B. Wood, deceased, of said Middleborough, George E. Wood and Charles A. Wood, the sum of five thousand dollars ($5000) each.

To Elisha T. Jenks and Abbie L. Simmons, both of said Middleborough, the sum of five thousand dollars ($5000) each.

To Alice K. Thompson, of said Middleborough, daughter of William A. Thompson, deceased, the sum of five thousand dollars ($5000).

To Julia O. Donnell and Julia Murphy of said Middleborough, who have kept house for me so long and faithfully, the sum of two thousand dollars ($2000) each.

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To Elton L. Pratt, of Lakeville, the notes and claims which I hold against him.

To David W. Thompson, of said Middleborough, the sum of one thousand dollars ($1000).

To Elisha T. Shaw, of said Middleborough, the sum of one thousand dollars ($1000).

To William H. Crosby, of said Middleborough, the sum of one thousand dollars ($1000).

To William P. Fessenden, Herbert A. Pratt and George Gove, all of said Middleborough, clerks in the store of P. H. Peirce & Co., the sum of five hundred dollars ($500) each.

To the Central Baptist Society of said Middleborough, the sum of ten thousand dollars ($10,000), the income whereof to be applied by said Society toward paying the salary of the Minister employed by said Society.

All of the before mentioned bequests are to be paid out of my estate within one year from the date of my decease, by my executor therein before mentioned.

I give and bequeath to the Town of Middleborough the sum of fifty thousand dollars ($50,000) for the purpose of erecting a Public Library building in said Town. Said building to be erected within two years from the date of my decease by the Trustees of the Public Library of said Town, who are hereby constituted a committee for that purpose, and my Executor is hereby directed to pay over the said sum to their order as required.

After the payment of the foregoing legacies and bequests, I give and bequeath to Chester E. Weston, George W. Stetson and George R. Sampson, all of said Middleborough, the sum of fifty thousand dollars ($50,000) as a special trust fund forever, the net income whereof shall be paid semi-annually, or oftener, to the Treasurer of the Public Library of the Town of Middleborough, to be by him applied to the purchase of books, periodicals or newspapers for said Library.

After the payment of all the before mentioned legacies and bequests, I hereby give, bequeath and devise all the rest and residue of my property and estate whatsoever, whether real, personal or mixed which I shall own or be entitled to in any way at the time of my decease, to Chester E. Weston, George W. Stetson and George R. Sampson, all of said Middleborough, but in trust nevertheless for the following purposes and uses viz:—

To be held as a special trust fund forever, the net income whereof to be paid semi-annually or oftener in the discretion of said Trustees, to the use and benefit of the Town of Middleborough in such manner as said Trustees or their successors shall determine.

The Trustees above named and their successors shall receive as full compensation for their services as Trustees, both of the Public Library fund, and the residuary fund, a sum not exceeding twenty five hundred dollars ($2500) per annum, for the three, and in case of the death or resignation of either of said Trustees, the survivor and survivors shall thereupon nominate a successor or successors, who shall immediately upon their appointment by the Probate Court become vested with all the rights and powers which the original Trustees exercise under this instrument, including the right to nominate a successor or successors in the case of death or resignation of the other member or members of the board, so that both said funds may be perpetually administered by a board of three Trustees which shall be continued in the manner aforesaid.

I hereby request that the three Trustees above named be exempt from furnishing any surety or sureties on their official bonds as Trustees under this instrument.

I hereby authorize and empower my said Executor to sell and convey at public or private sale, as he shall see fit, such portion or portions of my real and personal estate as he shall deem necessary for the payment of the legacies and bequests herein before mentioned, and I hereby authorize and empower him to execute, acknowledge and deliver such deeds and instruments as may be necessary to carry into effect the provisions of this paragraph.

I hereby authorize the Trustees herein named and their successors in said office in the administration of the trust confided to them to sell and convey, without leave of Court being first obtained, such portion or portions as they see fit of my real estate and personal estate or such real and personal estate as shall come into their control under this instrument, and no purchaser or purchasers shall be held responsible for the application of the purchase money, and I hereby authorize my said Trustees and their successors to execute, acknowledge and deliver all deeds and other instruments necessary to carry into effect the provisions of this paragraph.

In testimony whereof I hereunto set my hand, and in the presence of three witnesses this to be my last will and testament, this fifth day of August in the year nineteen hundred and one.

Thomas S. Peirce.

On this fifth day of August nineteen hundred and one, Thomas S. Peirce of Middleborough, Mass., signed the foregoing instrument in our presence, declaring it to be his last will, and as witnesses thereof we three do now at his request, in his presence, and in the presence of each other, hereto subscribe our names—

Amos B. Paun
Edgar D. Wood
Albert A. Thomas

Who will ever know who lived in this little old 1750 home a hundred years from now unless more of us explore, track down and mark the spot?

EXPLORING

By Lyman Butler

One Saturday morning recently I got itchy feet and decided to do some exploring. My friend Foster ("Babe") McComiskey had told me of the remains of an old Grist Mill on the brook which flows from the cranberry bog at Plympton and Raven Streets. Albert Sears told me that at one time there were three mills on Raven Brook between Plympton and Fuller Streets. Evidently this was one of them. Babe told me he had seen two perfect grinding wheels or millstones and I was very disappointed to find they had been removed, as he believed that the owner of the land might give them to the museum. At the last minute they sold the property and bulldozed a road into the remains and hauled the wheels away. As we proceeded into the site we were kind of trespassing as the land is now posted, but saw no one while there.

On the town map of 1855 it shows a saw mill at what seems to be the same spot on Raven Brook, listed as the Sproat and Eddy saw mill. Farther down near Fuller Street, after Bennet Brook joins Raven Brook, there is another saw mill listed with no name. As we looked around we found a part of an old shaft with pinion gear attached and a couple of old hand made bolts sticking out of the footings. The mill pond sets in a natural low valley like spot. A very well preserved retaining wall holds back the water. The day we were there the planks were pulled from the flume and the pond was practically dry, with just the brook running through. Evidently the men are working on the dike as there were tools and material around.

There was evidence of another sluiceway although the flume had been filled in so it would seem that both mills were using the same water reservoir. Talk about fresh water clams, the pond bottom was covered with shells as well as some live ones with their snouts sticking out of the mud. Some of them were as large as sea clams. Too bad they are not good to eat.

After looking around and trying to picture how the old mill might have looked we went back to Babe's house where he showed me some of his antiques. While looking over his bottle collection I saw an old Middleboro Bottling Works bottle, also one which was marked W. S. Gale Bottling Works, Middleboro. Does anyone remember this soft drink works? The only thing I can think of is that this was the little tonic shop that I wrote about in the April issue. The one that Rodman Robinson operated. "Babe" says if we haven't got one of these bottles at the museum we can have this one.

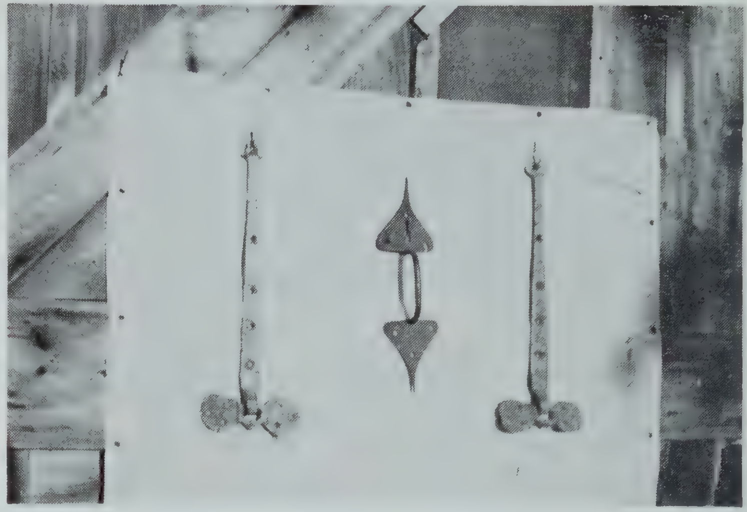
After this I thought I would look over a few cellar holes while I was out so went in Raven Street to the cellar hole of the old I. Bryant house which evidently burned long before my day. I scratched around the bricks and dug up a few old hand made nails. Hoping to find an old dump and maybe some old bottles I scouted around but found nothing old enough to mention.

I then went out to Short Street and down the old race track to the Old Elk Farm, seeing an old cellar hole near the junction of Tispaquin and Short Streets which according to the old map was the Mrs. H. Shaw place. This place evidently had burned a long time ago, and here I had a little better luck. Spotting a piece of metal sticking up out of the dirt I scratched around and unearthed a stove lid from a kitchen range; looking further I dug up a small round shelf, evidently from the same stove.

I then went along Tispaquin Street towards Plymouth Street and found a cellar hole and the ruins of an old barn on the right. Here I picked up a few old hand made nails and a tire from a light wagon wheel. I then came along to Rockymeadow Street and found the walls of a house that does not even show on the old map. Here there is a little cellar hole not over four or five feet square, well preserved and with a well defined path cut into the entrance. Probably a small vegetable or root cellar as they used to call them. Across the street is the cellar hole of what apparently was the J. Raymond place. I found some old nails but that was all. As my stomach told me it was getting near dinner time I headed for home with my relics, satisfied with my trek as I had found several places I never knew about.

Editor's Note:—

History is where you find it, but there are too few of us these days who are sufficiently interested to give up social pleasures and other activities to really dig for it. Research in libraries and museums, as well as exploring for unknown sites—AND—proper marking and restoration of WELL KNOWN SITES, take time. Judge Peter Oliver's now famous 18th century, pre-Revolutionary, industrial development has been preserved as a park, but it still remains for us to dig further and mark the furnaces, forges, slitting mill, finishing shops, grist-mill, iron house, saw mill and other buildings. Although there is a map in Weston's "History of the Town of Middleboro" showing these sites, our visitors from all over the Country do not have copies on their desks! I hope one of these days this project, started through the enthusiastic interest of Ted Eayrs with the generous assistance of Roland Robbins (who restored the Saugus Iron Works and many other historic sites) and gave us a great deal of time in spotting and helping plan a restoration, will be completed. I wonder if some of our scout leaders might consider explorations like Lyman's and "Babe's" on field trips, taking notes of locations and rescuing artifacts for preservation at the museum?



No. 10

MAN OF IRON

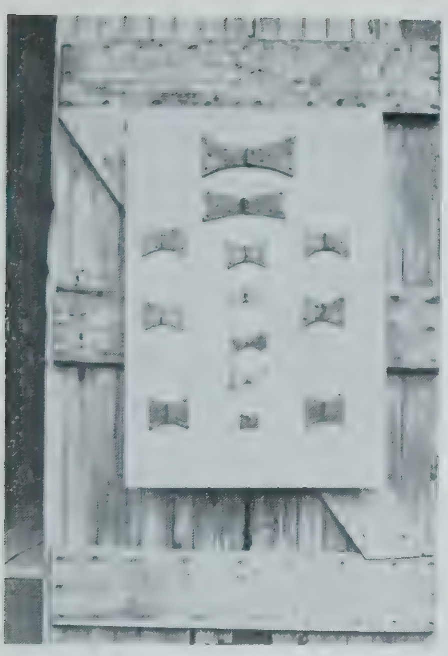
Part II

By Lawrence B. Romaine

When I left you back in Volume VII, No. 2, page 4 for April, we were just about to step out the kitchen door—or the big front door—for a breath of fresh air; remember? We had examined the blacksmith's work and many contributions throughout the inside of the old homestead from attic to cellar, and, I hope, come to the conclusion that he was without any doubt THE most indispensable craftsman and most valuable member of our 18th century community.

I most apologize at this point, however, because I now realize that I completely neglected the interior hardware, all of which was made by the smith. In illustrations nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9 and 10 you will find examples of the latches (door handles) hinges and locks for outside doors. I have left out the H and HL hinges with which I hope most of you are familiar, and selected the more unusual designs. After all if you don't picture an H or an HL hinge, just cut a large H of paper, or cut out an H making one leg like an L, place it up against the jamb and door, screw or nail it in place and you have it! On inside doors the hardware shown was made in smaller sizes. Of course we haven't space to show the famous stag-horn hinges, the plate latches, the many designs for shutter hold-backs, the fancy bolts and twisted hooks, the cobra hinges and the many oddities the smith created for the smallest cupboard door as well as the huge church, town hall or barn doors of New England—in fact for all of our Thirteen Original States. If these notes should intrigue you, and you really want to study blacksmith designs of the 18th century—and earlier—find a copy of Albert H. Sonn's "Early American Wrought Iron," 3 volumes, magnificent plates—Scribners 1928. To help a bit more; for the upstairs attic cupboard the butterfly hinge at bottom center measures about 3½"; the largest for the grain bin in the barn measures about 12"; the indoor strap hinges measure 5" to10", whereas those shown run up to 30"; outside box locks (no. 3) measure up to 8 x 15", their indoor counterparts about 4 x 6", and the latches (no. 2) inside might reach 8" whereas outside up to 20". As for the H and HL hinges, the cupboard sizes were about 3" to 4", and the one on the kitchen door I have in mind is 16½" long. End of apologies.

Let's step out the front door and then walk around the house and look at the kitchen and attached, catch-all, shed doors. We would probably find ourselves standing on a huge stone step with the footscrapers pictured in no. 6 on each side, well secured with lead in drilled holes. The illustration may be hard to visualize; it is a pair tied together—nearest you as you "set" you will see two feet of one, and these are set in drilled holes in lead. I hope you can make out the pair, each with its rams horn curled finials on each side. Other designs fitted between two doors with a half circle and were nailed to the wall so that it could be used for either door before entering. Some were very plain with nothing but two horizontal pieces supporting the scraping blade, still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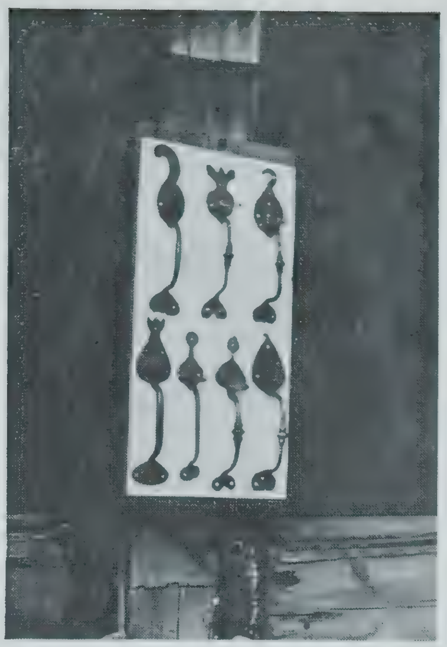
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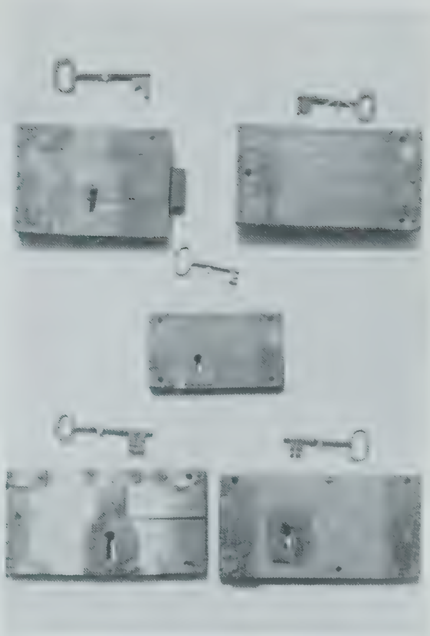
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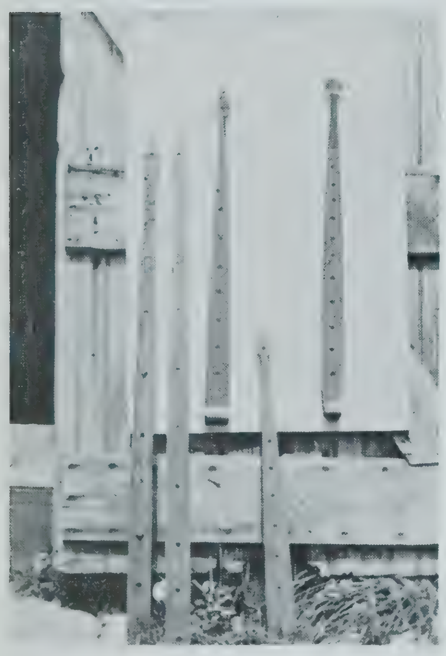
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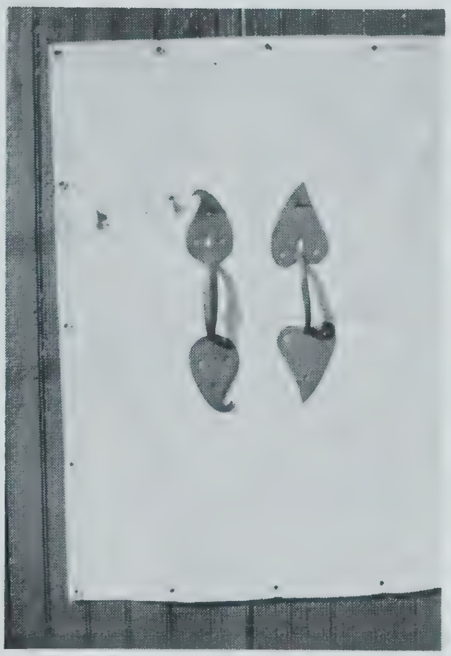
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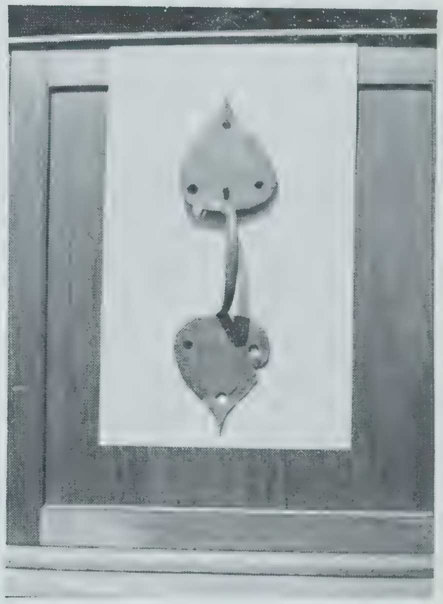
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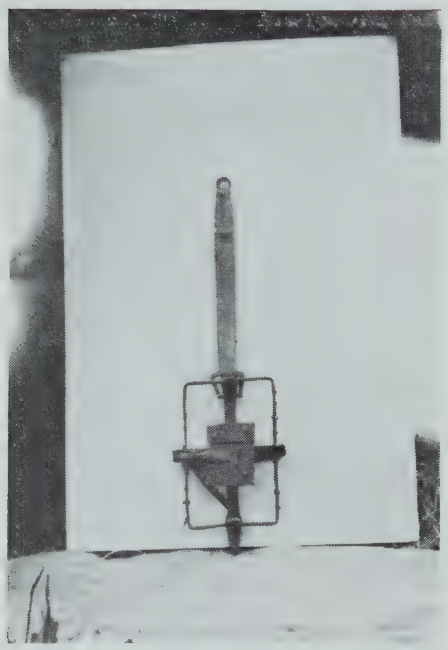

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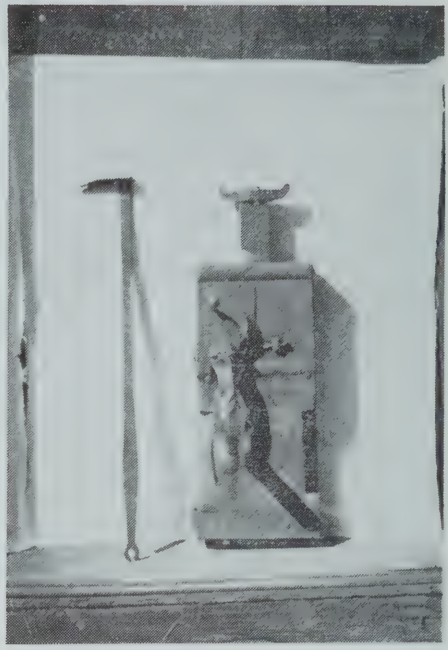

No. 7

others were made with heart motifs or with sprays of several curled finials. The latch might be one of those in no. 2 or perhaps no. 8, or if we picked the right 1750 homestead, we might find a delicate set like the one pictured in no. 10. The hinges in this illustration are known as "butterfly-straps," and the latch might well be called a toad sticker. There is probably a huge bolt on the door as well as a wrought iron drop-ring knocker of which I wish we had a cut for you.

As we walk around the house into the barnyard we find the old board, panel or batten shutters clinging to the walls and realize they are held fast not only by their hinges but by what are known as shutter hold-backs keeping them snug at the bottoms. These are wrought in many designs and driven in through shingle, clapboard and stud (if available). Like the ox bow keys, these also represented the individual smith's imagination, and were made in many different designs.

Coming to the back shed door, or "entry-way" to the kitchen as it might be called today, we find another huge stone step with maybe one plain, crude foot scraper. The latch on the door might be like the example in no. 10—plain but large and sturdy. Opening this outside door we step into the back shed and find plain strap hinges like those in no. 4, with a large bolt. This shed was usually used for everything from potatoes to extra cooking utensils, the family bath tub that graced the kitchen floor on Saturday nights to dry wood for the fireplace and a hundred other things for nearly every department of country living. Here again we find the blacksmith's work represented in garden, carpenter, ice and other tools necessary to the management of any farm. Hanging on the walls are wrought skates, traps like the one in illustration no. 5 (now hanging in our kitchen at the museum on Jackson street), ice creepers, adze, axe, hammers, nails—in fact anything for which there wasn't room in the house plus many things better to have handier than the carriage shed, north shed or barn in bad weather. On the door from the shed into the kitchen the hardware would be smaller and usually very plain.

As we wander through the barnyard with the north shed, the carriage shed and the huge old barn forming a typical Yankee "court yard," we see the work of our blacksmith everywhere. The hardware—i.e., huge hinges, latches, handles, bolts, hasps and even perhaps a large oak lock on the barn—has been treated already and I won't bore you with further details. The carriage shed is of course loaded with farm wagons, carts, huge wheels, extra hubs and "tire or wheel irons," a wagon jack shown in illustration no. 7 (or more likely a plainer one, as we selected the most unusual to give you an idea of his best workmanship), chains and wagon hardware, a "diggin' iron," and maybe an ice chopper (we have one in the Ernest S. Pratt Industries Exhibit at the museum), a bull ring or two, scythes and sickles and other farming tools of wrought iron, on the dirt floor and hanging from the wall and timbers on iron nails and wooden pegs of maple and oak. As we start for the barn we pass the old well with its chain and winch and iron bound well bucket. In the barn we might find the old harrows and plows with blacksmith parts and braces, or maybe a rope winding machine, a corn sheller and other hand gadgets, each with several iron parts.

Atop the barn of course we see the weathervane, probably of sheet iron, also an example of the smith's imagination and handiwork. After about 1830 weathervanes were wrought and cast of copper in full body, but back along in the earlier days they were cruder. Again I wish we had a few cuts—but here again I must refer you to Albert H. Sonn's "Early American Wrought Iron" for illustrations. Our vane might be an Indian with his bow and arrow, a horse or cow, or maybe just an arrow, each with its points of the compass underneath.

We have exhausted our available illustrations, and have run out of space, and must leave you with whatever impressions we have been able to make of the indispensibility of American blacksmith of Colonial days and throughout the 19th century. There is one more reference for those of you who perhaps never realized that long before the cast iron box locks (and even up to the Civil War in some of our communities), these guardians against marauders and trespassers were made of maple and oak and even of New England pine, with iron braces and keys shown in illustration no. 3. The blacksmith's job was to whittle out the inside of the lock, manufacture the parts, and put them together so that the keys worked the large bolts properly. About 1830, when H and HL hinges and other hardware were stamped out by presses and machinery, these wooden cases were made by woodworking machinery in quantity; however, it still remained for the smith to make the working parts. For complete details see Antiques Magazine, Volume XXXIV, 1938—"Wooden Box Locks." We hope these few notes may entice you to our museum building on Jackson street where I guarantee you will find "in the flesh" all these examples and more, from cellar to attic; I think IF you are really interested, the Blacksmith Shop will keep you busy for a pleasant hour—at least.

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MUSEUM NEWS

Each issue when I try to type this column, all I can think of is the ancient and honorable (?) auctioneer's notice that reads roughly: "Many things too numerous to mention." Another one that comes to mind is "first things first;" how foolish can wise saws become? If there are fifty-seven **firsts**, how does one select the **real** firsts—and how many may be left over for that tomorrow that may never come?

Thanks to the patient perseverance, planning and just plain hard work, of Mertie Witbeck, Ernest Judge and Arthur Craig, the Ernest S. Pratt Industries Exhibit, and the Joe Peck Print Shop have become realities. Ceilings have been repaired, floors scrubbed and properly painted, walls mended and painted in hallways and new exhibit rooms in both houses. Both stairways in the building on the corner of Lincoln street have been plastered, the old stair tread covers removed and the stairs painted, AND, the upstairs hallway AND three more rooms have been readied for new exhibits! New shelves in the Gay Ninety Kitchen have been built and painted to display the kitchen implements that had flowed over into the Nickerson Indian Artifact Collection room which our assistant curator Ted Eayrs plans to reorganize completely in June. The largest of the new upstairs rooms will be one of the "neatest" Yankee bedrooms you ever saw, dating about 1850. Screens have been made for the cellar windows which we hope will dissipate some of the dampness in the OLD kitchen and the blacksmith shop. Lyman and Ken Butler have the landscaping under control, and to adapt another old saying, our goose hangs high for a good season.

However, when we come to acquisitions, although we are pleased to have five new exhibits under way, and so many plans of long ago fulfilled, our storage space has practically vanished! Talk about a birth explosion—our acquisition explosion of years ago is still on the increase! DON'T STOP, FOLKS, we'll manage somehow.

We are very grateful to many of our loyal friends for a great many contributions—in fact even though the comment doesn't belong here, we are grateful for every subscription to the Antiquarian, and every new membership—does that give you an idea? More particularly we do want to thank the following "partners in the crime of preservation of history" as follows:

Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. Thomas for a generous check for $250.00 for museum expenses, as well as his thoughtful gift of a copy of Thomas S. Peirce's will, and the helpful suggestion that we publish it in this issue.

Mr. Kingman Pratt of Hingham, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alton G. Pratt for two beautiful wedding gowns worn by his grandmother, Mrs. Sally Kingman Tillson (Mrs. Henry Tillson), and by his mother, Marion Kingman Pratt (Mrs. Alton G. Pratt).

Mrs. Guy W. Brackett and Mrs. Ida May Ryder for a small prayer stool from the Third Calvanistic Church of Middleborough, built in 1791 and torn down in 1852; also a copy of "The Dairyman's Daughter" in braille, published in 1835, owned and used by Patience C. Benson, with her signature on the title-page (See The Antiquarian, Volume VII, No. 1, page 5, February 1965); also two pamphlets published by her many friends for her support.

Miss Evelyn Chase for a handmade rag rug made by her Mother, Mrs. Eva N. McEnroe.

Mr. Wilfred Keyes for a fine old pair of candle-snuffers.

Mrs. Leonard A. Baker for a fine old tall walnut bookcase (that just fits neatly in our library that has been waiting patiently for just such a gift!)

Mrs. Arthur Gorey for two little baby nightgowns with the old fashioned needlework.

Miss Miriam Bassett and Mrs. Inez Alder for a pair of 19th century wedding slippers.

Mrs. Louis Cole for a small collection including memorabilia of the Civil War and Sons of Veterans, early spectacles and a photo of Countess Magri (Mrs. Tom Thumb to most of our readers) with the Count's signature on the back.

Mr. Herbert Haley for many things among which a small "Caxtonette" hand card press adds tremendously to the furnishings of our new Joe Peck Print Shop!

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Osborne for the grand old hand printing press which is the corner stone of our Joe Peck's Print Shop. (Joe Peck was Mrs. Osborne's Father, and I now wish I had had the foresight and time to jot down many of his printing tales of long ago for the Antiquarian. If our foresight was only ten percent as good as our hindsight, we'd all be better off by a D--- sight.)

Mrs. Ernest S. Pratt and Miss Louise Pratt, again—for many things, but at the moment especially for the new exhibit The Ernest S. Pratt Industries Exhibit. When you visit us on Jackson street you will appreciate these few thanks. Not only have these young ladies given us all the old tools and requisites of the ice and charcoal trades created and worked by Ernest Pratt, but also a pictorial panorama in six large frames WITH dates and historical notes. The one in full color is truly a great piece of research for folks who think only of electricity and ice cubes. Also a collection of razors, strops and hones used by many Pratts from about 1790, and, a small box of raw wool with a pair of wool carders for our Weaving Exhibit.

I would like to add here that as curator, I am more than grateful to Lyman Butler, Mertie Witbeck, Ernest and Charles Judge, Babe McComiskey, and others for not only giving but for acquiring and **bringing in** acquisitions. As most people may forget, a curator's lot is not always a happy one, and to have others help in the leg and time work is a blessing.

While we are in the mood, and before we forget it, I do especially want to most sincerely thank our loyal advertisers who gave up their space in the last two issues so that we could include more historical text and illustrations. Without their financial support The Middleborough Antiquarian would have died a penniless pauper long ago. Gentlemen, please, don't give up the ship—we won't let you down again—unless of course YOU come to US—in which case I'll be glad to have your space, and substitute another of these short but sincere lines of appreciation!

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ALPHABETICAL RHYMES

This rhyme was printed in the Middleboro Gazette many years ago and is to be found in several old scrap-books. Author unknown. Some of the names are unfamiliar today, but many will be recognized. Rev. Henry M. Grant and Rev. William H. Bowen were pastors of the Central Congregational and Central Baptist Churches, respectively, during periods ending in 1888, which is an indication of the time the poem was written.

While walking the streets one fine summer day,
My thoughts fell to rhyming, in a curious way,
Of the men of influence, I knew in town,
And lest I forgot them, I noted them down.

A stands for Alden, of Straw Shop renown,
Whose works are sent for from every town.

B stands for Bowen, our Baptist divine,
You all ought to hear him, he preaches so fine.

C stands for Carter, who plays in the band;
Also for Chandler, our favorite hack-man.

D is for Doane, who would call your attention
To all kinds of goods too numerous to mention.

E is for editor, who walks about town,
To gather the items of news floating round.

F is for Fryer, who cures all the ills
Of his patients, by giving them small sugar pills.

G stands for Grant, who preaches the word,
In the Congregational church he is heard.

H is for Hayden, who will mend a clock spring,
And sell you a watch, or a fine gold ring.

I is the ice cream we all like so well,
Tripp and Barden both have it to sell.

J is the Jones Brothers, they say it is certain
They will put down a carpet or hang up a curtain.

K stands for Kingman, who has such lovely flowers,
That the ladies go there and tarry for hours.

L is for Leonard, who makes shoes and boots,
A good place to work, if you happen to suit.

M is for MacBurney, who points us the way
To Jesus our Saviour, if we will obey.

N is the Nemasket, whose waters so sweet
Flow through our town on every street.

O stands for Osborne, who has tickets for sale,
To all who wish to travel by rail.

P is for Peirce who sells hardware and tin,
And everything else; it will pay to go in.

Q is the question. What shall be done
To run the rumseller out of town?

R stands for Ryder, who sells dry goods and toys,
And dolls for the girls and books for the boys.

S the crooked letter. O list to its fate.
A mournful story I'm going to relate.
S stands for Smith who doctors the ills
And for Shaw who puts up his powders and pills.
Also for Soule who carries off the dead.
And for Surrey who puts up a stone at the head;
Also for Sullivan who will read you the will
When the funeral is over and all is still.

T stands for Thatcher who sings loud and clear;
He is going away, we wish he'd stay near.

U is our Union, may the flag ever wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

V is for Vaughan who lives on School street,
A carpenter and does his work very neat.

W stands for Wood, there are many to be seen,
But Andrew Cobb Wood is the one I mean.

X is the crosses we all have to bear,
Y is for Young who shaves and cuts,

Z is for Zoeggele who drives through the town
And sells pastry and white bread and brown.
& and the letters are ended, my story is done,
Sometime I may write a better one.

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25c

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JUDGE WOOD'S LAW OFFICE

GLIMPSES OF MIDDLEBORO IN 1857

The following article was written in 1907 by one who signed himself Elder Young. The Middleboro Gazette reprinted the article in the issues of April 1st and April 15th, 1932. When written in the year 1907, the writer was describing the scene in Middleboro as it was in 1857, fifty years before; today the reader is looking backward one hundred and eight years. In this issue is the section appearing in the Gazette of April 1, 1932; that of April 15th will appear in the Antiquarian of February, 1966.

MEW

It is a well-established fact that in any thriving town or village many great and important changes are wrought during fifty years of its life, and Middleboro surely cannot have it said of her that she is behind other towns in that respect. Should a man arrive in our town today having left here fifty years ago, he would, to say the least, be somewhat surprised. He might possibly find now and then a building that had a familiar look, but very few that were standing then, even if they had not been replaced by more modern structures, have been so altered or remodeled that they present an entirely different exterior appearance.

We will now, in the language of our fathers, go down to the corners, or if you please, in the more up to date expression, "go down town." Stopping in the center of the old four corners, where once was situated the old town pump, facing Centre street we can all remember changes that have been made on the Peirce block corner and the Bank block corner on the left.

Passing up Centre street on the right, no great changes are noticed except the enlargement of the buildings now used as stores by Jesse F. Morse and Sparrow Bros., and the large building now occupied by F. N. Whitman's Dry Goods store and standing on the lot once belonging to the Waterman estate, previously the Central Baptist church parsonage, the T. W. Pierce building at that time being a stove factory occupied by Perkins, Leonard and Barrows. The old "Bourne" house, a large two-story building, stood on the upper corner of School street where the Sullivan building is now located and was built on ground several feet higher than School street, which was graded to a stone wall about three feet higher than the sidewalk. (Note 1)

On School street, all the boys of nearly half a century ago who are living today and attended school in the old School Street schoolhouse, which is passing through its final days as an

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Middleborough, Mass.
VOLUME VII 1965 Number 4

Lawrence B. Romaine	Editor
Mertie E. Witbeck	Associate Editor
Miss Martha J. Howard	Proof Reader

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SCHOOL STREET SCHOOL

educational institution, will remember running on that wall and jumping off the end, and will also remember the old well with its creaking windlass that brought up all the water from the cold corner that was used in the school, and there was lots of it used, for they were hard drinkers then and some of them are now. (Note 2)

Going back to the corner of Centre and South Main streets, we do not notice much change on the left side of Centre street from the Bank Block corner until we reach the B. F. Tripp candy store which was originally the old school house standing near the Charles F. Cornish house on North Main street. Then Thatcher's block, which was a garden lot enclosed on the street side with a wide wall, a substantially built stone wall which extended around the corner and well up towards the site of our present town house. (Note 3)

About this time the old Academy, which was built many years before upon the site of the present Academy building, was sold and moved up the street just west of the house of Joseph M. Leonard and there used for many years as a bonnet bleachery by the Leonard brothers. This old academy building was sold to make room for a more commodious building to meet the demands required by a fast increasing scholarship of over three hundred. Between this Academy building and the Baptist church, was a small building known as the Baptist chapel which was moved onto School street near where now stands the residence of Andrew M. Wood and there used in connection with the Academy as a gymnasium and dormitory and later by the Methodist society as place of worship. (Note 4)

From the Academy we come to a small old-fashioned house surrounded by cherry trees occupied by Isaac Lucas and finally sold to make room for the Episcopal church and moved to Coombs street near East Main street. The next house was occupied by Arnold B. Sanford, agent or manager of the cotton factory near where the electric light plant now stands. Between this house and Pearl street was a large field extending from Pearl street back toward the south and to the east to South Main street, being the baseball ground of Middleboro, and many an exciting game was hotly contested there. The Centre and Pearl street side of the lot was fringed with oak and wild cherry trees which always afforded reserved seats for the small boys watching the game.

Across Pearl street where now stands Hotel Aragon was the old cellar dug and stoned by Armington, the tailor, but on account of death in his family, never builded upon. Next beyond the house of J. M. Leonard stood the old bleachery of the Leonard brothers; beyond this was the vacant lot corner of Centre and Oak streets.

Going back to School street, after leaving the old Bourne house on the corner, at a slight bend in the road we come to the old "Erpell" house, now used as a market, with its garden of myrtle between it and the sidewalk and three mammoth cherry trees standing on the outer edge of the sidewalk. Next is the space now occupied by Leonard, Barrows shoe factory. Then it was a hole in the ground being several feet lower than the street and which in winter time furnished a nice little pond for skating or sliding. Back of this on higher ground, partially hidden among old twisted and crooked apple trees, stood the little log cabin where we boys first learned our A B C's. From Pearl street to Oak street there was only the William Washburn house on the corner of Oak, later occupied by William Bassett and family. The large stable at the rear was used by George Barrows as a livery stable. It was later moved across the street and became the C. D. Kingman shoe factory and later became what is known as the Cushing block near the corner of Centre and Oak streets.

At the upper right hand corner of Centre and Oak streets, stood a small building used as a cobbler's shop by a respected and unfortunate personage known as "Dummy" Tinkham. Beyond this was the Leonard's house now owned by Dr. Ellis. Forest street was simply a lane leading up to the Foley house on the right, now owned by E. B. Cole, and the Keith house on the left, now owned by R. J. Brett. Beyond Forest street or lane, there was only one house before coming to the railroad track, the Eliphalet Thomas house, now owned by Dr. Holmes, the vicinity of Everett street being a large field bounded on the west and north by heavy pine woods which came out to the street and extended to the railroad.

Going back to Oak street on the left we find on the corner the little green house occupied by J. C. Cushing. The Catholic

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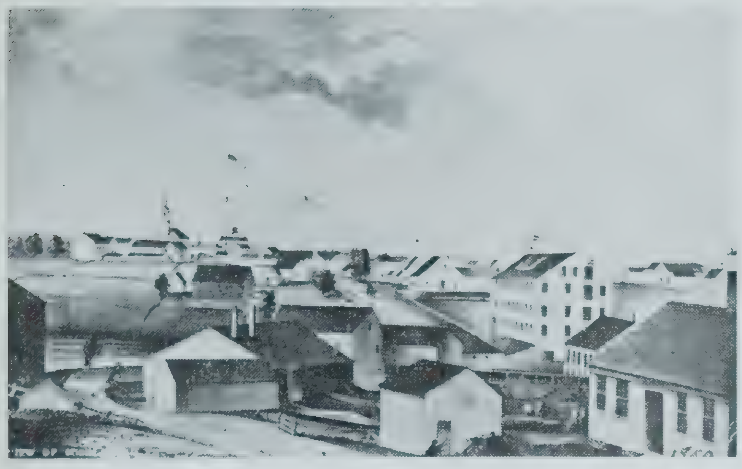

VIEW OF MIDDLEBORO FROM BARDEN HILL IN 1850

parsonage was then owned and occupied by Col. Lothrop Thomas, E. N. Osborne, or as it was then called, the depot master, living upstairs. From this point to High street was a large field, the exact spot now occupied by the Catholic Church, being a slight depression forming in the winter time a small pond for skating and sliding.

Station street was a way opened up for railroad travel, the station then being not far from the south end of the present freight houses surrounded by woods and swamp land with not a house in sight. Centre street from Station street to the railroad and now known as Centre avenue was lined with a heavy growth of wood on both sides, while on the southerly side near Richard's block was a favorite place for the mayflower which is now only found in Middleboro on Barden Hills.

It would be very difficult to describe Centre street near the railroad crossing as it formerly appeared, for probably nowhere in town has there been a greater change than here. By the abolishment of the grade crossing, succeeded by the overhead bridge, embankments have been constructed and highways relocated, causing a radical change in this vicinity.

After crossing the track, on the left, was a small growth of oak trees and underbrush, while on the right was a very heavy growth of pines extending to about where West street now is. Beyond this on both sides were fields of the Lane farm reaching to the cemetery on the right; on the left, directly opposite Lovell street, is the old house once occupied by Judge Lane, while just this side stood the large barns and carriage sheds, for besides being a prosperous farmer, Judge Lane was a well-known horse man and proprietor of the Middleboro and Plymouth stage route, which was first started in the winter of 1853 by Ruell Atwood, making daily trips. Judge Lane, who was the proprietor of the Nemasket Hotel at that time, started a semi-daily stage route between Middleboro and Taunton; some of us well remember the old yellow Plymouth stagecoach as it rambled through the corners with George Taylor as its driver.

Beyond the Lane house and the cemetery, which by the way was very small compared with its present size, having been incorporated but a short time, were heavy woods nearly to the Lakeville line with the exception of the farm at the corner of Centre street and the Taunton road owned by Enos Eaton. Nevertouch Pond was very nearly surrounded by forest, so that just a drinking place for cattle was visible back of the Lane house. On the east side of the pond was a grove of pine trees, but which showed evidence of having once been a corn field many years before.

Coming back again to the railroad station, the old round house stood just at the south of the depot, while the Cape Cod woodshed, for all the locomotives in those days were wood burners, stood just across the track nearly on the site of the present station. Just a little south on a very high embankment, for the Cape track went through a very deep cut just south of the station, stood a little house known as "Cronan's on the hill."

Returning to the centre and going south through Main street, we find the American building on the left reconstructed by Sampson and King about this time, also the adjoining block of Shaw and Doane and that of Eustace Field, now known as the Soule building, completed at this time. Opposite the American building was the store of Deacon George Vaughn, then the large homestead of Allan Thatcher, then the Dr. Thompson house, recently moved to make room for the Unitarian church. Webster street was little more than a lane leading down toward the river to Benton street which, with Clifford street were on the map with but one or two houses.

Beyond the Soule building on South Main street came the chapel and the Congregational church, the Philander Washburn house, now the estate of L. P. Thatcher. F. L. Barrows' residence has taken the place of the small cottage of Captain Howes. Next was the house of Thomas Lazelle, since removed to Pearl street and known as the Aragon annex. Next was the house of the well-known deputy sheriff, James Cole. (Note 5)

Beyond the Dr. Thompson house was Temple Place, leading from Main street to the Baptist church, and from there a large field extended along the highway to the house now occupied by Mrs. James E. Peirce with the large dark-colored two-story Washburn house standing near the Centre, afterwards removed to Webster street. (Note 6)

But little change is seen in the number of houses on the right until reaching the residence of Mrs. Charles F. Alden; from this point to Courtland street was a very low, wet and rocky bush pasture. (Note 7)

From Rock street, which remains the same with the addition of now and then a house, passing by the houses of Mr. Harlow and Mr. Cole, large and substantial residences face the street where there was nothing but pasture and swamp land to the house of Esquire Ebenezer Pickens (in the locality known as Court End, which derived its name from the district court being for many years held in the house) now owned by F. T. Belcher, excepting the very small old Miller house that stood close to the sidewalk near where is now the residence of Hon. Matthew H. Cushing. (Note 8)

Passing on beyond the house of A. J. Pickens was a large field extending to the river on the east and Grove street on the south. On the right hand side of Main street after leaving Courtland street and passing the J. M. Pickens estate now occupied by Superintendent of Schools Bates, we find the old Bourne house, a small unpretentious building standing on the spot now occupied by the F. N. Whitman house. (Note 9,

Next beyond was the old Bourne mansion, now occupied by Mrs. Charles F. Peirce. (Note 10)

This part of town in its early days was called "Mortontown" and not much change is noticed on this side of the street, excepting the removal of the old town house, which stood not far from the house now occupied by F. W. Hayden and near the corner of Main and Grove streets. (Note 11)

At this point the highway made quite a bend to the westward in order to clear the old Morton house, a large and historic building which stood squarely across the present highway near Prospect street. Beyond this it is much the same now as then, excepting the railroad crossing which has been changed from a hill to a hollow by the passing of the grade crossing at Alpha's Hill, or as it was known in the early days as "Spooner Hill." (Note 12)

Grove street was built previously to accomodate travel from the south part of town and beyond into Taunton and was a well-traveled highway through fields and forest.

Oak street from Centre street south to High street is practically the same with the addition of the house built by the late Joshua Sherman and the Hose House No. 6. On High street going from Centre street was the house of Professor Burnett remodeled by the late Charles E. Leonard. Next was the house

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of Eldbridge Smith near the corner of Pearl street. Below Pearl street an open way led by the home of the late Capt. S. B. Gibbs to the house of Martin Standish. Pearl street south of Centre street had only one house, that of Azel Washburn before reaching High street; after crossing High street it became a lane leading down into the fields to two or three small cottages. On the corner where now stands the residence of the late John C. Sullivan, (Note 13) on the vacant lot was a circle of tall trees of the evergreen and fir species, which all the boys of those days that were in the bird egg business well remember, for there was where some of the rarest ones in town were found. Back of Capt. Gibbs house a path led across the field coming out at the rear of the Baptist church and Academy, passing on its way a rocky hillock surmounted with two or three wild cherry trees which seemed to be a favorite spot for the local photographer to throw his sweepings and refuse; at all events it was a favorite spot for the boys who there obtained many tintypes of pretty girls that could not be obtained by them in any other manner. Retracing to Oak street after passing the two story house on the corner of High and Oak streets, on the left is a long expanse of field to Courtland street; on the right, after passing the houses of Alvin C. Howes and Mrs. Swift, heavy pine and oak woods extended to Courtland street and thence around the corner nearly to the railroad station. The vicinity of Southwick street was low, marshy land and an almost impenetrable mass of underbrush and bramble. Near the house of Granville L. Thayer was a path running through the woods to the depot and in the opposite direction running through to Main street. The main building of the Straw Works was erected by the Pickens brothers about this time on Courtland street opposite the foot of Oak street, and causing an immediate change in this locality. Many houses have been built on Elm street since this time. The credit of this section of town is very largely if not wholly due to the push and enterprise of the late Albert Alden who purchased the business and conducted it for many years under the name of Bay State Straw Works.

NOTES

Note 1. The Sullivan block is now the Glidden building. The old Bourne house which stood on that corner was moved to Union street and used by a Mr. Carl as a boarding house.

Note 2. The old School Street School was purchased by Otis Briggs and moved to Centre street, now the building in which the Kearney sisters have an antique shop.

Note 3. Many of the early pictures of Peirce Academy and the Central Baptist Church show this old stone wall.

Note 4. This little chapel was purchased by John Burt LeBaron and moved to the corner of West street and LeBaron avenue and remodeled into a dwelling.

Note 5. The Cole property was purchased for the site of the present Church of the Seventh Day Advent.

Note 6. The home of Mrs. James E. Pierce was located next to the site of the former Bates School. It was purchased by Jesse F. Morse, then sold to the Harold Hall's and more recently to the Whiting family.

Note 7. The Charles E. Alden house is now owned by Mrs. William B. Crossley. On the low wet and rocky bush pasture was built the house now occupied by Mrs. Esther L. Burgess and the one next to it, built by Philo Perkins and long occupied by the Charles L. Soule family, later by the Crossley family and at present by the Pollards.

Note 8. The house now owned by Mrs. Leonard A. Baker

Note 9. Superintendent of Schools Charles H. Bates occupied the large house on the corner of Court End avenue and South Main streets. On the opposite corner was the Dr. Clark house which was moved down South Main street to a site near the railroad bridge and became a part of the Dorrance house, torn down to make way for new Route 25. On the site of the Dr. Clark house was built the home of Fred N. Whitman, now occupied by Dr. Raymond H. Wood.

Note 10. The old Bourne mansion stood on the corner of what is now Bourne and South Main streets. This was a large estate going through to Elm street. Bourne street was named for Major Bourne who lived there, the street opened in 1912 by the Middleboro Realty Company. In 1916 Mr. Elwyn B. Lynde built his home on the site of the Bourne mansion, the mansion having been moved to West Grove street.

Note 11. The first town house stood on what is now an empty lot on the corner of South Main and West Grove streets. Next to the site is a small house with pillars, one of the oldest houses in the vicinity. It was known as the John Alden Thomas house, later becoming the home of Fayette W. Hayden and now occupied by the family of the late Walter E. Alger.

Note 12. Alpha's Hill was so called because of a large house belonging to the Crossman family which stood on a hill just beyond the railroad bridge. In the family were Alpha, who worked the farm; and two eccentric sisters, Hannah Cordelia who became a physician and Clarissa who served on the school committee.

Note 13. Formerly the home of John J. Sullivan, now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rockwood.

(Continued in February issue)

W. S. GALE AND THE MIDDLEBORO BOTTLING WORKS.

By Lyman Butler

The first thing I want to do is to thank Bert Perkins for information he gave me on the old W. S. Gale bottling works that I mentioned in the June issue. I mentioned that it might be the Rodman Robinson spring at Warrentown but Bert says he remembers that the works were located in the building next to the old Nemasket House which would be the old Norris building where Winthrop-Atkins were located at one time before moving to the Leonard Shaw & Dean shop on Peirce Street. As you all know this is where Grants is today.

Bert also says that his brother Bartlett known to all as Bart, worked for Gale and eventually bought the business and changed the name to Middleboro Bottling Works and moved to Jackson Street in one of the old P. H. Peirce buildings where the parking area is at present, directly back of the Court House.

Bert tells of the first delivery truck that Bart had. It was a Lafayette car with the back of the body cut off and made into a small truck. He used this for sometime and then got a real delivery truck. This was a VIM which I can remember when I was a youngster. I used to spend quite a bit of time at the bottling works as a good friend of mine, Rodman Vaughn, used to work there after school and Saturdays, and I used to help him sometimes so he could get off a little early for a game of baseball.

The Museum would appreciate having a bottle that (Babe) McComiskey offered us!

Back to the tonic works as we called it. When the ball park was on North Street I used to go up every chance I got, and I can remember Bart driving in with the truck to leave tonic for Harry (Penina) Berman who had a couple of tubs of ice and used to sell tonic to the many people who used to go to the games.

Incidently if I remember correctly Bert Perkins played ball on this field.

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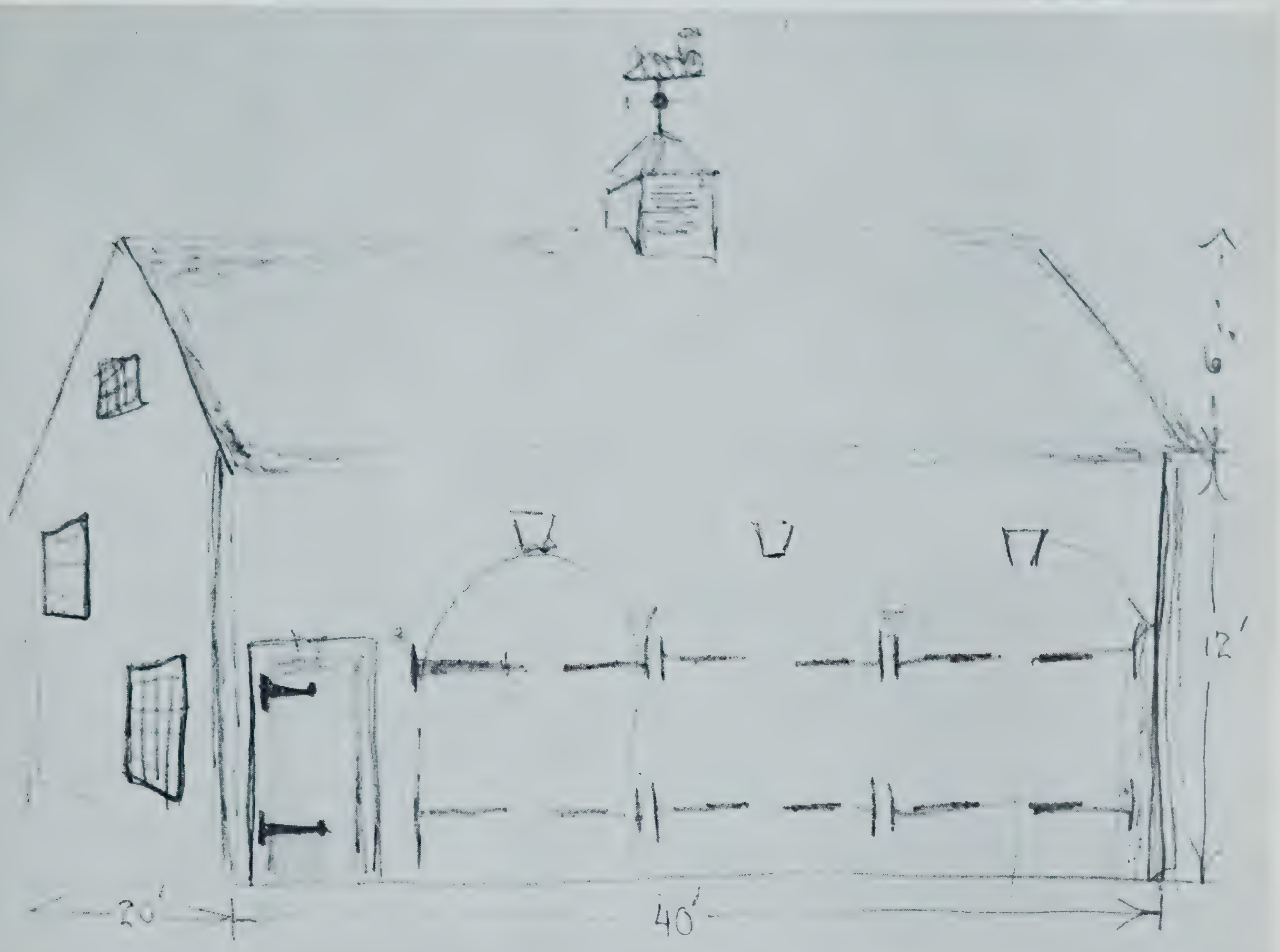

NEW BUILDING FOR HISTORICAL MUSEUM — AS SKETCHED BY TED EAYRS, JR. AS A FITTING MEMORIAL TO THE OLD CARRIAGE AND WAGON SHEDS THAT ONCE SERVED THE PEIRCE STORE

Our permit is hanging in the museum office on the corner of Jackson and Lincoln streets, and Arthur Craig will break ground this Fall. The building will rest on a granite foundation that once surrounded the grounds of St. Luke's Hospital (along Centre street) and will appropriately match the foundations of our two main buildings. The building will measure 20 x 40 feet, and provide three main exhibits on the ground floor (the blacksmith shop, the farm implement and machinery exhibit, and a selection of smaller exhibits such as the cooper's shop, the basket weaver's shop, and others to be selected and set up next Spring). These exhibits will be 12 x 20′ and will properly exhibit for the public for the first time these major local trades.

The loft will temporarily provide much needed storage space, and will in the future (we hope) also house exhibits of the hundreds of contributions and gifts that are practically oozing through the windows and walls of the upstairs of our corner museum building. Perhaps the dreams of the past five years are coming true—maybe that little acorn will yet wax mighty as the oak and smite Plymouth and Sturbridge with the fear of 1966 competition? American historical organizations and their museums have become big business, and if we are to survive, we must continue to grow—not only in acquisitions, but in their proper display, with proveniance as well as educational cataloguing and intelligent explanation.

The cost will be approximately $2,000.,—and even though we have about $600. on hand to get the foundations in before frost (which is in itself a miracle most of you have not suffered through five years of borrowing from Jimmy to pay Joe do not realize), we will have to do some tall scrambling to latch on to the balance when we start framing next Spring. This might be a good time for some of you to start thinking about your income tax that is coming up—and, if you are hunting wildly for generous tax-deductable charitable, educational, historical suggestions, HERE, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN IS A WOW. Buy a piece of Middleborough's Historical Museum and its struggle to preserve both local and New England history. I KNOW there are scads of other possibilities, BUT, you have only ONE historical association, and IT has only ONE BABY—YOUR OWN LOCAL HISTORICAL MUSEUM. Make those deductions NOW for 1965—why wait. THINK of the anxiety you'll save this small group of dedicated workers—FEED THAT MOUSE this coming Winter, and help us build a historical preservation of which not only YOU, but the entire U.S.A. can be proud. NOW. How about it? Any and all contributions, great and small, may be sent—any time at all!—to Mrs. Mertie E. Witbeck on South Main street, Mrs. Harold Pratt, Pleasant street, North Middleboro, or to the Museum Mouse—care of box 272, U.S.P.O.

FLASH! One of our members has just offered to DOUBLE the first $500.00 raised! Lets all pull together and start 1966 with $1000.00.

GIDEON FRENCH OF BOSTON, TALLOW-CHANDLER, 1784 TO 1819

By Lawrence B. Romaine

I have been able to find but two printed records of the existence of Gideon French. The discovery of six manuscript ledgers with his accounts from 1784 to 1819 beg silently for further recognition. With the growing shortage of both funds and adequate room in our national, state and local historical organizations and libraries, I am reluctant to relegate them to storage without first placing this rather fascinating picture in modern type for future reference.

In the first Boston Directory for 1789 Mr. French appears on page 20. He is listed as a bricklayer and tallow-chandler on Water Street. Again, in the Boston Directory issued July 1813, he is listed as a tallow-chandler on Leverett Street. Perhaps bricklaying did not pay, or more likely the demand for soap and candles, rush lights and watch lights paid better. Whereas these two notices might provide a run of the mill epitaph on a gravestone, they do not seem to me a fair record for a successful Boston manufacturer and merchant in the post Revolutionary period.

Perhaps he was a personal friend of Paul Revere (see inventory for 1796), and perhaps he fought his way through the War for Independence, contributing his time and efforts to our present way of life. That he was not an officer and does not appear in the Dictionary of American Biography means nothing. Of his patriot activities we have no record. The least we can do is to print some small account of his contributions to lighting the homes and scrubbing the hides of Bostonians in our kindergarten days.

The earliest ledger in the collection opens with an inventory dated November 20, 1784. It is a fine old American binding in sheep, or what some people call American vellum. There is no way of proving that this is the first book of accounts kept. It is possible that the business might have been started during the war, but from the figures I would guess the shop had not been running for very long. These figures are in pounds, shillings and pence.

Boston 20 nov: 1784.

To Stock in the Shoop					
1109 lb. of tallow	@6	[£]	27	14	6
17½ lb. Cotton wick	3/		2	12	6
12 Baskets Coal	1/			12	
6 lb. Cotton	2/			12	
87 lb. Candles	@7/2		2	14	5
1 half pound Rush				2	
270 ½ lb. tallow	@6/		6	15	3
12 Boxes	1/2			14	
1 ¼ lb. Rush				5	
1 ½ lb. Rush				6	
9 Barrells	@2/			18	
851 Grees	@4/		14	3	8
28 Bushel ashes	6			14	
By Cash for the Shoop				10	
. . .					
By Cash Recd Col. Wattars			1	13	5
By Cash Recd Govr. Bowdoin			3	2	
To Cash to pay Brownsden			15	4	
Spinning Wick				12	
To 6 Syder Bbls.				9	
Settled nov 1786			£137	15	1

The fact that this first inventory was settled in 1786 indicates a possibility that Gideon French might have purchased the shop on November 20, 1784, stocked as listed. All such records are delightfully provocative but historically frustrating. Perhaps we had better take things as they were set down for us and not reason why. The figures do provide a rather good picture of a tallow-chandler's shop in Boston in 1784.

In the ledger for 1796 to 1802 we find a clearer description of the actual equipment and furnishings. We also discover that Mr. French had a partner, or at least a financial angel offstage, who as pages and years go by paid all his lighting and washing bills "by ballance rec'd. in his profits."

1796	Gideon Thayer Dr. to the Expences for the shop	
October 5th	To a box of candle moulds six dozen	$42.83
	To eleven stands for Ditto @4/6	8.25
1797		
August	To building a shed & putting down three Leaches stuff and work	59.96
	To a small pump for lies	5.85
	To one Iron Kettle	50.00
	To setting Ditto	10.00
	To 2 large tubs for soap	8.00
[1798]		
May 23	To a cart saddle collar & haymes	8.25
Octr. 25	To an ax'letree for the cart	1.75
Novr. 8	To a Copper Ladle & Swimmer	6.17
Decr. 21	To a horse Sled	8.00
1800	To making a window over the soap kettle	2.00
Jany. 28	To repairing the cart	2.50
	August 20th 1800 the above Settled in full Errors excepted	$213.56
1800 Octr 4	To repairing the cart	$4.00
1802 Jany. 22	to repairing the Cart	3.25
March 25	To cash paid for repairing the cart	15.00
	To repairs made on the Soap kettle	49.90
	To bottom put to chopping troth	2.00
Decr. 8	To 1 pair cart wheels & ax'letree & Wheelbarrow	$28.75

Such a page of tools of American craftsman of this period is very provocative. Did Paul Revere cast the huge kettle for $50? Did he also create the copper ladle and swimmer—and what was the swimmer, a skimmer? Was the man who built the window over the soap kettle a member of the Associated Housewright Society that first met at the Green Dragon Tavern in 1804. Could it have been Benjamin, Bolter, Hearsey, Lincoln, Loring, Sumner or Todd of the first committee to set up the organization?

A man is known by the company he keeps, and quite often a merchant's clients are an indication of his reputation in a community. A list of Mr. French's customers might be headed by Governor James Bowdoin and end with William Scollay—of Scollay Square, shall we say. Also, a man who actively engages in a trade for nearly forty years is generally accepted as successful.

Now for a few amusing conjectures. Although Governor Bowdoin purchased page upon page of candles, both moulded and by the pound run of the barrel, there is little evidence of his bathing. Shall we give him a black eye or shall we assume that Mrs. Bowdoin had a Mrs. Tiggywinkle in the kitchen who supplied the household? Although Proctor & Gamble began supplying Cincinnati with soap in 1837, thousands of Americans made their own soap right on through to 1940; I had a neighbor in Bridgewater who give us a small box every Christmas.

Hannah Otis and Elizabeth Bowdoin both ran large accounts for rush and watch lights and also for moulded candles. Candles by the pound and moulded candles were two very different things. In this day and age the surest way to make a point is to put it in dollars and cents. Ordinary candles cost 18 cents **per pound** but moulded candles were figured at 22¼ cents **each.** Watch lights were about 20½ cents each and rush lights roughly 25 cents a piece.

Caleb Bingham's **Young Lady's Accidence** was published in 1785. I will not lower myself to counting the number of candles he purchased during 1784 because some future biographer might misinterpret the reckoning and decide that he wrote all night and slept all day; too many biographies have been compiled just that way. His bathing record, on the other hand, is good, even though he did buy soap by the pound and not the barrel, as did William Scollay!

With the details of this nineteenth-century shop before us we can summarize the cost of reading in bed and bathing, to a certain extent. The common soap of the day cost about $4.00 a barrel. Cakes of soap brought about 12½ cents each. It's a shame Mr. French does not mention soap moulds or their designs and cost. I think it probable that soap was soap from about 1784 to perhaps 1825 or later, although I do not claim to be a student of this trade or craft. The amazing thing about it is that our best soaps today only run about 14 cents a cake, unless you count the very special perfumed varieties for special purposes. On the other hand, **think** of the milk, eggs, lamb and beef of 1784—and 1959.

I have already noted rush light, watch light and candle costs. Just what candles were 18 cents a pound it is difficult to say. It seems reasonable to assume they were dipped. Our museums have hundreds of examples of candle moulds of this period, running from one candle to four dozen. The moulds for two to four dozen are built in stands, as noted in the French inventory of 1796. It is difficult to determine from this ledger item just how many individual moulds went into one stand. It would seem that the box contained six dozen, or 72 individual candle moulds. A hasty local checkup finds that the best and fanciest candles of 1959 cost just about as much as those moulded in 1784.

I wish there were time to tally the tallow in candles and soap manufactured by Gideon French and sold to the good citizens of Boston from 1784 to 1819. On the other hand, with a good sound record of equipment, furnishings, tools and stock, perhaps such an accounting would not seem important. He served his community well. He lighted them to their baths, furnished fine moulded candles for their social activities and entertainments, allowed them to pay their accounts in ashes, "sewit" and "grees," and coöperated in every way he could to encourage reading, writing and cleanliness.

Reprinted from OLD TIME NEW ENGLAND
Courtesy of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

CHECKING SOME OLD SPOTS.

By Lyman Butler.

On a bright cool Saturday recently I decided to check a few old locations. Some I remember from my childhood and some I had never been to before. The first I decided on was the Old City. A short while ago I was talking with Mr. and Mrs. Rebell about this spot, it being about a mile in the woods directly back of their home on Everett Street. They told me that there was not much of anything left now to show where it was located except an open spot in the woods and a few of the old apple trees which were evidently in the various yards.

There were three entrances to the Old City, one through what is now the Sabalewski Farm on Purchade Street and another from old Center Street near Roy Huntley's and one through John Rebell's place on Everett Street. I chose this entrance and went in through their yard and crossed the railroad tracks and over the brook, (I believe this flows into Purchade Brook) and followed the road for about a mile as the Rebell's suggested. I came to a brook just before the opening in the woods. I found it just as was explained to me. I checked all around but could find no remains of cellars so would imagine that the buildings had no cellars under them, and all wood must have rotted away years ago. I looked for a well of some sort but found none so wondered if possibly that brook, which was on the edge of the clearing might have been the water supply. It seems to me this was kind of an out of the way place for a settlement and what the people did for a living no one seems to know. They must have had fun getting out after a big snow storm.

On the way back I looked around the site of a saw mill which had been put up in more recent times, as there were some wooden posts and a pile of half rotted slabs, so this could not have been removed too many years ago.

While in the vicinity I looked around for a burial plot which friend Paul F. Anderson told me he had seen while hunting some years ago. I had no luck at this either finding nothing which would indicate a burial ground. There were plenty of mosquitos and I was glad to get out in the open again.

From this location I went to Plain Street where I remembered an old cellar hole from about fifty years ago. This was well in the woods at Morton hill and I would surmise by the location that this was the old Livy Morton place mentioned in the Weston Middleboro History. There is not much change in the spot, only more trees and bush. Levy Morton was grandfather to Livy Morton one time Vice-President of the United States.

My next stop was where the old R. B. Kimball house stood. a short way below Plain Street on Thompson Street. I knew that this cellar hole was there but had never explored about it. There never was a building on it in my day. I was surprised at the condition of the cellar walls; you could almost build a house on them, except for the trees growing inside. I guess that will never happen as the land is now owned by the new Brick Co. and they are only interested in what is under the top soil of the area. A well is on this spot in very good condition, with plenty of water. Noticing a piece of metal sticking out of the ground I dug a bit and came up with a step of an old wagon and also a draw bar of some sort, both of which I will put in the blacksmith shop of the museum if anyone is interested to see them.

I intended to go to the site of the old Leach place but did not have enough time so will have to make that spot on some future hike. I did note the markers of what are supposed to be graves of two slaves that belonged to Mr. Leach. These are on the side of Plain Street just about where the road leads into the old Leach place.

MUTTOCK SCHOOL

By Lyman Butler.

When my family moved to the house on Plymouth Street we were really between Warrentown and Muttock. We were in sight of the old Muttock School on the corner of Precinct Street but it had been closed for sometime and we had to go to the Purchade School.

My father told of going to school in the building when he was a boy. Ben Chapman also attended school here. The place was boarded up and more or less forgotten. Why the town didn't sell it I never knew. We moved to Thompsonville a couple of years later and as we walked to town on a Saturday to go to the movies at Town Hall we would always cast a glance at the old school. We were somehow fascinated by this old relic of a building. We always wondered what it was like inside but knew better than to take off a board and sneak a look. One day as we were going by one of the doors was ajar, so we had our chance. I guess it was quite a let down when we looked inside, for the place was pretty nearly bare of furniture, and only the old shell of a building remained. We were satisfied anyway and went on our way.

About a year later on the fourth of July someone touched a match to the old school and that was that. It made a good bonfire, and we saw the flames from our house on Thompson Street but did not know what it was at the time.

My father said it brought back many thoughts of the good times that he had in the old school. This flat iron piece stayed empty save for a brief visit of the gypsies each year for a long time. Finally Norman Quindley procured the land and built himself a home there. Nothing is left now to remind us of where the old school stood.

COMPANY I, 3rd. REGIMENT MASS. VOL. MILITIA — NEWBERN, NORTH CAROLINA 1863

Mrs. William Crapo has entrusted to our care for preservation a small leather notebook with the following note on page one:—

> "CAMP JOURDAN, NEWBERN, NO. CAROLINA JUNE 5th 1863.
>
> Coppied by Francis N. Crapo Co.I 3rd Regiment Mass. Vol. Mil. at Camp Jourdan, Newbern, N. C." (sic)

It would be hard to estimate how many books have been written about our great Civil War, and how many manuscript account and notebooks and diaries have been transcribed and printed for posterity. Most of the details check and double-check, and the overlap is beyond the wildest imagination; and yet authors and publishers still flood our libraries and homes with more.

This manuscript copy of the roster, rank, illnesses and deaths in Company I will be preserved in our archives for research, but I think the occupations of these boys and men who helped to preserve the Union might be of interest to our readers as they were all residents of this "neck of the woods," and many of them ancestors of the families who now live here. In this day of atoms and atomic powered machines, buttons and space, this record provides an amazing picture of the number of trades and hand crafts of our 19th century in a small Yankee locale.

The officers and soldiers in this one company hailed from Lakeville (Middleborough before 1852), Fairhaven, Rochester, Mattapoisett, Acushnet, Marrion (sic), New Bedford, Falmouth, Tisbury, Wareham, and Raynham. As you run down the list, think of these many occupations, most of them limited to hand tools, that have been completely swallowed up by huge corporations and manufactories.

Skipping the roster, the ranks, the deaths described in detail from bursting shells to drowning and simple pneumonia, accounts of which you can find by the thousands in many printed books, let me list only the occupations of the boys and men who "left their desks and plows" to serve their Country.

Searg'nt. Kinney, Mattapoisett, Jeweler
Searg'nt. Rankin, Rochester, Farmer
Sgnt. Rogers, Fairhaven, Artist
Sgnt. Sweet, Johnston, R. I., Stone Cutter
Corp. Copeland, Fairhaven, Caulker
Corp. Tripp, Fairhaven, Clerk
Corp. Waterman, Litch Field, Me., Teacher
Corp. Warner, Chester, Mass. (?), Mariner
Corp. Mendall, Marion, Stairbuilder
Corp. Cox, Fairhaven, Student
Private W. F. Allen, Marion, Oil Refiner
Private C. A. Allen, Marion, Team(s)ter
Private A. Barrows, Mattapoisett, Blacksmith
Private W. W. Benton, Hebron, Conn., Shoemaker
Private C. M. Benton, Raynham, Nailor
Private G. H. Briggs, Fairhaven, Carriage Maker
Private H. P. Crowell, Fairhaven, Iron Moulder
Private Carroll, Waterville, Me., Baggage Master
Private F. W. Cole, Rochester, Marble Worker
Private N. F. Cole, Middleborough, Cooper
Private Carver, Stunton (Stoughton??) (sic), Baker
Private Casswell (sic)—, Fairhaven, Picture Trimmer
Private Crosby, Osterville, Carpenter
Private Dexter, Mattapoisett, Painter
Private Dodge, Farrington, Me., RR. Repairer
Private J. Ellis, Mattapoisett, Sawyer
Private Freeborn, Providence, R. I., Brass Moulder
Private Nye, Acushnet, Grocer
Private F. E. Reandall (sic), Mattapoisett, Farrier
Private Willcox, Fairhaven, Ice Dealer

I have of course eliminated many duplications; there were many farmers, blacksmiths, coopers, mariners, etc. This record lists thirty different trades and occupations IN ONE SMALL REGIMENT. Today the entire list would be catalogued under mechanic, contractor, railroads, education, U. S. Steel, A. & P., and perhaps even General Motors! We are trying to preserve the tools and supplies of many of these long forgotten trades, and I hope this printed record may be used by scholars and students, libraries and museums.

MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS.

Mrs. Blanche Cannon Tripp contributed a lot more costumes and clothing from boot to hat—and then the other day I ran into a new ice saw in a wooden case that Mrs. Ernest Bassett of Manomet gave to Mrs. Ernest Pratt for the Pratt Industries Exhibit—and a fine old two man saw like the one grandpa used to use gettin' firewood. And of course a week hardly ever goes by without Mrs. Ernest Pratt bringing in tools, kitchen equipment, hetchels, and so durned many things I can't keep track of 'em—that guy with the pipe is always scattering 'em the minute they git here—and anything he misses is grabbed by that pretty young librarian and placed somewhere else. Miss Flora Porter brought in some ancient copies of the Middleboro News for 1882-1886 for the files. Mrs. Joseph Cannucci brought us her grandmother's (Mrs. Amy Vigers Smith) paisley shawl, a neat old parasol, and some organ music books for the Tom Thumb organ. I think I told you about the new bedroom with the decorated suite given by Ernest Thomas—or didn't I? (Upstairs, corner house). Reginald Drake gave us a fine old picture of the Assawampsett, and some papers—one of them a photostat copy of one of Judge Peter Oliver's letters to his Brother-in-Law Governor Hutchinson in 1766. The reference library now has a collection of scrapbooks, clippings and papers from Mrs. Jennie Hayden's estate given by Mrs. Herman Delano; another of those dummies that startled me the other day came from Mrs. Harry Henderson, and Miss Lydia Cobb has added a lot of old books to the library. Mrs. William Crapo contributed a small manuscript notebook written by Francis N. Crapo at Camp Jourdan, N. C. in 1863; there is to be a more complete story in this issue—and you'll be surprised at the number of trades that our little neighbor Lakeville supported back during that decade—it's quite a startling record of the Civil War.

Well, Folks, I guess that's enough. Gotta get off this stool—been sittin' on my tail too long now—not sure it will straighten out again—shoulda known better than to curl it up under me like that. Tally Ho for today—but don't forget that new building fund—don't let these hysterical folks down—if you help, they'll really have a little Sturbridge Village right here, and it'll be ALL YOURS.

No, wait a minute, can't go to press yet. Mrs. Beatrice Gammons Gillis of Brockton just presented us with a fine old GAR hat once worn by John Gay Gammons. Then while we were carefully placing the hat in the new military room finished this Summer by Ted Eayrs, Jr., Mrs. Alberta Sullivan gave us a small collection of memorabilia including a fine old camera with a box of plates, an iron cook-pot, and some old pictures. I suppose as soon as I get to Thatcher's with all this there will be more coming in!

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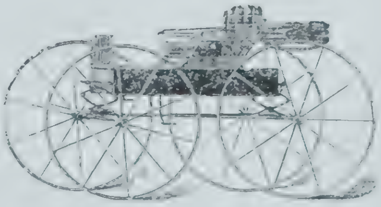

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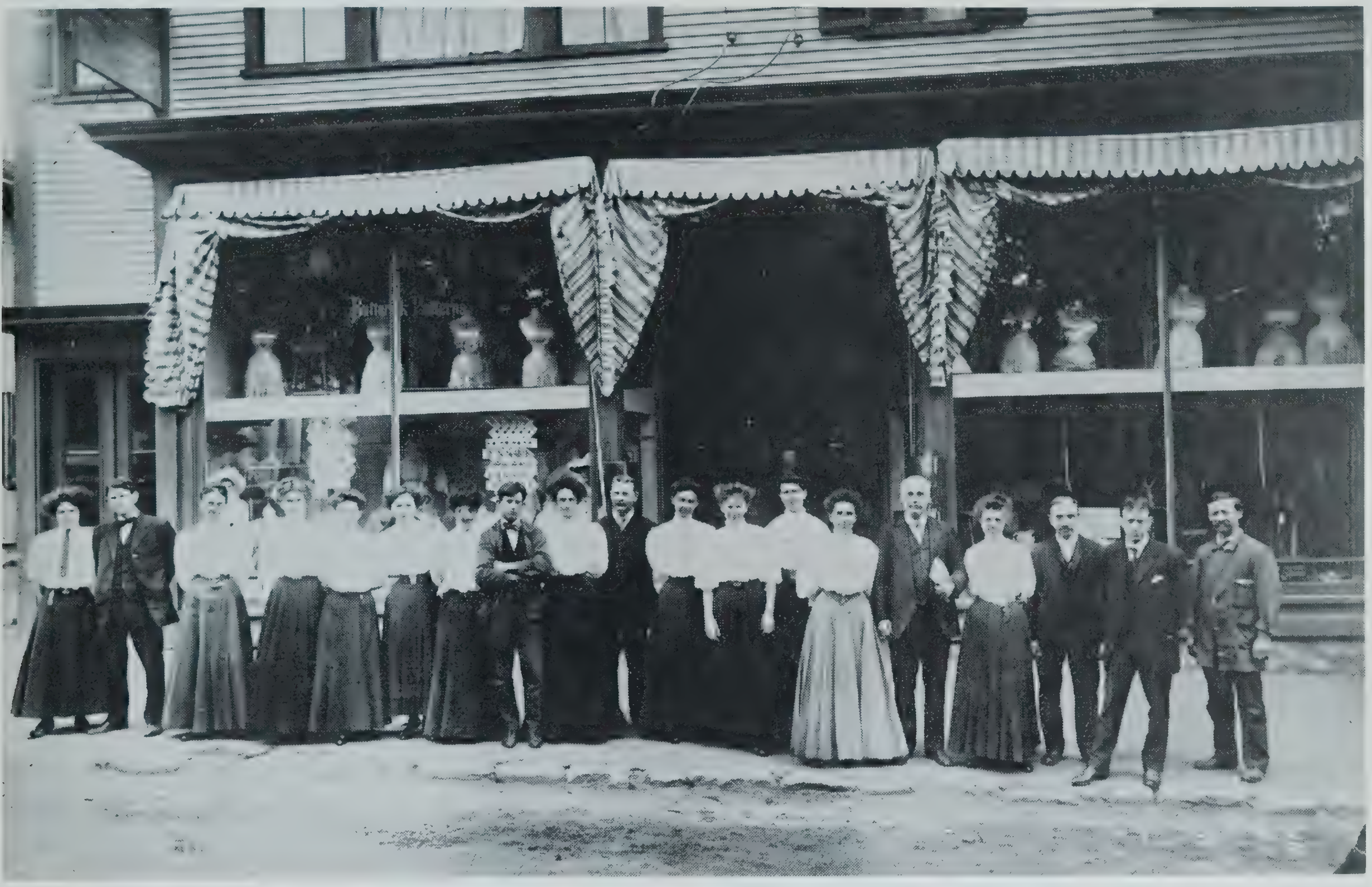

THE FRED N. WHITMAN DEPARTMENT STORE

THE FRED N. WHITMAN DEPARTMENT STORE

This picture of the employees of Whitman's store was taken about 1910. The Middleborough Historical Museum is the proud possessor of the dress forms shown at top of the display windows. Those in the picture are, left to right: Lulu Shea, Walter Gillis, Abbie Brett, Lucy Crawshaw, Elizabeth Williams, Sara Levy, Nellie Drummond, Oliver Brett, Mary McDonald, George Tate, Emma Breach, Frances Purdon, Mary Shaw, Nellie Kelley, Alonzo Ryder, Lydia Holmes, Amasa Glidden, James McNeil, and Neal Harrington, Sr. (The original photograph was presented to the Museum by Foster McComiskey, Jr.)

The Fred N. Whitman department store dates back to 1874 when Middleboro's first dry goods store was opened in the Wells block on North Main street by George T. Ryder who, with his son Jesse, came from Foxboro to establish the firm. Thriving business encouraged the owners to open a second store in Thatcher's block on Centre street. In 1883, Mr. Ryder purchased the Waterman property on the opposite side of Centre street, built a new store on the site and moved his two establishments under one roof.

After the death of Mr. George Ryder in 1894, the business was purchased by Fred N. Whitman, J. Augustine Sparrow and Harry P. Sparrow and the firm become known as Whitman, Sparrow & Company. Nine years later Mr. Whitman purchased the Sparrow interests, the firm's name becoming Fred N. Whitman. Mr. Whitman died in 1921 and the store was conducted by the Whitman estate with Irving Robinson as manager. In 1928 the business was purchased by Providence parties and in the next few years changed hands several times, including an interim when it was one of the Trade Mark Stores. During this period, Alonzo F. Ryder, long an employee of the store, purchased an interest in the business, within a few years becoming the owner and changing the firm's name to Alonzo F. Ryder Company, Inc.

Mr. Ryder was associated with the store more than fifty years, having come from Foxboro in 1874 with his uncle to establish the Ryder store on North Main street. Ill health caused him to dispose of the business in 1934. James McNeil, who had been an employee of the store since 1906, was the purchaser. He operated the store as the James McNeil Company, taking his son Walter into partnership. After Mr. McNeil's death in 1949, his son Walter conducted the business until it closed in 1962.

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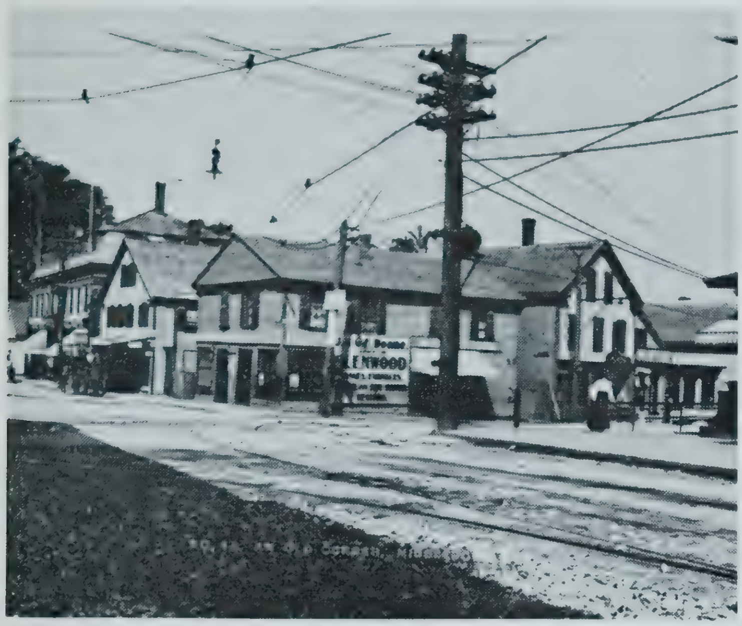

North corner of South Main and Wareham streets. Building on corner long occupied by Michael O'Toole, tailor. Next store occupied in early days by grocery store, later by harness shop, auto accessory store, Cloverdale store, replaced in 1911 by telephone building. Third building, Jones block, earlier known as Wells block. Small white building, William Ladbury's bicycle shop.

GLIMPSES OF MIDDLEBORO IN 1857
Part II

(continued from November 1965 issue)

Returning again to the Centre and passing east through Water street recently changed to Wareham street, Peckham's Market was a dwelling house occupied by Stillman Pratt, then there was a clear field to Clifford street. On the opposite side of the street the new buildings are Richard's market, Cushing's grain house, storehouse and stable in back, and reconstruction of the house now occupied by Sheriff Everett T. Lincoln. The former street railway car barn has replaced one or more factory tenements. The old "red house' on the corner opposite Lincoln street, formerly known as "Slab street," has changed very little except the color; first north of this is the new residence and greenhouses of Timothy F. Creedon. Passing down "factory hill" on the right stood the old "mill' house, for many years untenanted by human beings and which finally passed off in smoke not long ago. Near where the electric light plant now stands stood the large four-story yellow painted cotton mill, with its bell tower facing the village instead of the street. This, too, went up in smoke many years ago. Next beyond this the old up-and-down sawmill with its long log carriage reaching nearly out into the highway, the grist mill of Edward Perkins, and the old shovel shop just beyond. Going up Barden Hill very little change is noticed until after reaching the house of J. Edward Barden; from here the highway went up the hill which has had several cut-downs in the past few years, through the woods and at the junction of Acorn street just over the crown of the hill, this "Wareham Road," as it was called, made quite an abrupt curve to the left, passing by a very sandy way beneath the tall pines whose branches almost formed an arch overhead and coming into a straight line again near where Wood street crosses the present highway. There were only one or two houses between those on Barden Hill and Fall Brook, one of those being on the left side nearly opposite the present blacksmith shop and known as Raymond's Corner, the other on the right now occupied by Mr. Williams.

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Starting once more northward from the center, the old building on the corner occupied for many years by the veteran clothier, M. O'Toole, looks the same as when Israel Wood Thompson sold kerosene and molasses on the farther side. The old grocery of Uncle Amos Thomas, occupied successively by father, son and grandson, and the Wells block, built by Dr. Wells, recently destroyed by fire, the latter having already been replaced by a more modern building, stood next in line, while crossing the street the old one-story corner grocery has been supplanted by the Peirce block. The Nemasket House and the old shoe store have been much improved by extensive alterations. Passing on to Jackson street, very little if any change is seen on that street, while on the opposite corner stands the public library on what was once known as the "squash lot," being several feet below street surface and protected on Peirce street by a high board fence and on the front by a substantial granite wall at the end of which the sidewalk under the old lilac bush ascended a flight of four granite steps to surmount the hill and get over the driveway going into Colonel Peirce's yard. From here on the left, Reland street has been opened and several large two-story houses have been erected in what was known as the old "Barrows' " field; Barrow and Myrtle streets at the lower end of this field also have been opened and are thickly settled. The old apple orchard on the right beyond the residence now owned by Charles E. Cornish has disappeared and a cleared field for building lots now extends over the site of the old Fort of more than two centuries ago, clear to the river. Beyond this Coombs street

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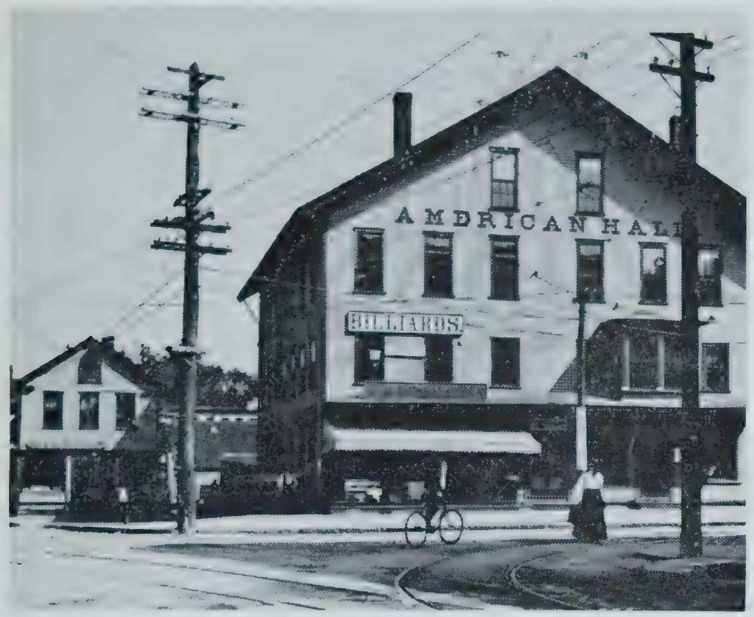

South corner of South Main and Wareham streets. Small building is Peckham's Market. Built about 1850 by George Soule as home and place of business, cabinet maker and undertaker. Peckham's Market was sold in 1924 to George Lang of Onset who operated market until building was demolished in 1933. American Building dates back to the early 1840's and was first occupied by Hon. Philander Washburn's store. In 1854 size of building was doubled, a second story added, called American Hall.

on the same side has opened and several houses on both sides of Main street have been built. From the junction of North, Montello and East Main streets, at what was then known as Wood's corner, looking down Montello street, a few new houses are seen on the left, while down East Main street several new ones are seen. About this time the Star Mills was built with its settlement of corporation houses, succeeding the old grist mill and shovel shop. Passing up North street, several new houses have been built on the right, but the old hay field and Peirce meadows still look very natural.

Going down School street, the first noticeable change on the left is the new brick school house which has supplanted the old wooden one in which so many of us served time in the old days. Adjoining was a grove of very large oak trees where the Methodist church now stands. Near the residence of A. M. Wood and upon a little hill shaded by oak trees stood "Grove Hall" used by the Methodist society before the erection of their present church. Next on the same side was the house now occupied by J. B. Simmons, and from here the street passed through fields to North street.

Pearl street from Centre to Peirce street has not changed much, except the large shoe factory on the upper corner, the Unitarian church on the left and one or two cottage houses on the right. Pearl street from Peirce to North street is of a very recent origin, and near the residence of Henry B. Schleuter passes over the end of the once famous "pond hole" where many of the best skaters of Middleboro took their first lesson and had their first bumps. In later years, a fire engine wharf was built on the edge to protect the vicinity in case of fire. Peirce street starting from North Main street has been greatly improved at the corner by the erection of the public library. Passing up the street, on the left nothing but a hole in the ground reminds us of where John O'Donnell made gas so many years for the people of Middleboro. Above School street nothing has been changed on the left except the building of the parsonage on the corner, while on the opposite side of the street the change has been very marked, for in place of green fields from School street beyond Peirce street now stands a number of dwelling houses. A great improvement has been made in filling up the southwest corner lot of Pearl and Peirce streets which was several feet lower than the street and which, during the spring of the year, formed a reservoir from which sometimes a stream of water flowed across the sidewalk. From the residence of William H. Crosby up to the Dr. Comstock house on the corner of Oak street was a grove of large oak trees which extended back into huckleberry bush pasture across the corner of which was a well-worn pathway making a short cut for people from the lower end of Oak street and Muttock to the "Corners."

Passing down Oak street from Centre street northward, no marked change is observed until after passing the "Fittz" house on the left. From this point to the Brightman house in the grove, woods and bushes came down to the street, and Arch street only existed in a narrow and crooked path extending through the woods over towards the depot. From Arch street on the right was a field which extended back to the present field in the rear of the Unitarian church (Note 14). On the southeast corner of Oak and Peirce streets was a woodlot through which a crooked pathway chipped off the corner. Below the house now occupied by George L. Finney, the pine woods came clear to the street to the lower side of Sproat street, while across the street were bushes and woods nearly to North street. From this point to Muttock hill little change has been made. Passing down the hill on the right, at the foot and just under the hill on the left-hand side, stood the little house of "Billy Allen," the miller which was long since destroyed. The old grist mill has passed into oblivion and nothing now remains but a few old ruins of a once busy place. Passing over Muttock bridge, a great change has been made in the highway, made necessary by the building of the Plymouth and Middleboro railroad, Plymouth street now running this side of and parallel with the railroad toward the Green, the Bridgewater road now passing under the railroad bridge and turning to the left before reaching the old Washburn mansion instead of going up by the house and turning a sharp corner to the left as formerly. The old school house that stood high up on the hill above the corner has been moved to a more convenient locality nearby. This same school house was originally built and used as a school house on South Main street, very near the present residence of Honorable Matthew H. Cushing and afterward moved to Muttock. What lately has been known as Leonard Heights and Peaseville, comprising Arch, Forest, Everett, Cambridge, Frank and Clara streets, was covered with huckleberry bushes, heavy pine woods, oak woods and in some places an almost impenetrable swamp. This tract of land was traversed by several old roads, or perhaps Indian paths. One old Indian path entered from Centre street, passing on the right hand side of the residence now owned by Dr. Ellis, through his side and back yard, coming out on Forest street near the residence of Elmer B. Cole, thence turning to the left near the residence of Andrew Alden and running nearly parallel with Arch street and finally crossing it at Everett street, reaching and crossing the railroad a little north of the foot of Arch street; after crossing the railroad near the site of the Keith shoe factory, rounding the swamp on the right hand, crossing Trout Brook near the old mill operated by Abraham Barden and finally after various twisting and turnings arrived at a point near the North Lakeville line. A right hand branch of this pathway started

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from the rear of Dr. Ellis' house and continued back of the Fitz and Brightman houses on Oak street through the swamp to a point near the present town stables where it was joined by a road or pathway coming through the woods and fields by the "pond hole" from some point on North Main street. It continued on back of the houses on Oak street through the pines to a four corners in the woods back of the house of the late Job Braley, one path coming out at the junction of North and Oak street, one going over the hill to Muttock and the other going toward and finally crossing the railroad and intersecting the first named path. Almost half-way from this four corners in the woods to the railroad was a five corners, one road going to the northward having two forks, one coming out on North street down the hill by the side of the house now owned by Mrs. Hannah Warren, opposite Spring street, the other coming out further down on Maple street near the Everett street railroad bridge; one going to the southward through a swamp to Forest street and intersecting the first named path; one going west and crossing the railroad; one going southwest through heavy pine woods in the vicinity of Cambridge street and crossing the first named path, came out on Centre street at the railroad crossing; the fifth path being the one already described and going eastward. In addition to these paths or roads there is a well-defined roadway which was apparently once a traveled highway, starting from Everett street nearly opposite the residence of George R. Sampson, taking a westerly course crossing the railroad through the woods, crossing a brook over a well-made stone bridge and coming out to a clearing in the woods known as the "little city" where once evidently there were several houses, there being a well and evidence of cellar holes still remaining; from this point a road runs northward coming out on Purchade street, while evidently the main road keeps on through the woods and fields and crossing Centre street near the old Leonard place on the hill, comes out near the Lakeville line.

Many more and perhaps even greater changes might be observed if we could but look back one hundred years instead of fifty. Will our children or our children's children see greater changes as they look backward fifty or one hundred years from today? Who can tell? Who can picture in their minds the future destiny of Middleboro?

Elder Young

Note 14. The Unitarian Church was moved in 1907 from Pearl street to the corner of South Main street and Nickerson avenue.

THOMAS AND LUCAS GROCERY STORE

By Lyman Butler

Recently having some purchase to make I went into Cumberland Farms Store on Center Street. As I entered I couldn't help thinking of the many times as a youngster I had gone into an old building on the same site. I am referring to the Lucas and Thomas Grocery Store.

My Grandmother lived on Wareham Street in the house next to Nemasket Auto Garage at this time. This house was one of Everett Lincoln's many. As my Grandmother did not get out much my brothers or I used to do most of her shopping, and Lucas and Thomas was where we got the most of the groceries. One of the things I remember getting often was cocoa shells which were steeped in hot water which you drank like cocoa, also graham flour, molasses (bring your own jug), vinegar right from the barrel; we even got kerosene for the lamps here. Grandma had an old gallon can with a spout which we plugged with a potato so the oil wouldn't spill.

If I remember rightly you couldn't get a loaf of bread here as nearly everybody made their own. If not, Pasztor and Klar's Bakery was just a few steps away. Ice Cream was unheard of in a grocery store as were frozen foods and such. What a change in a half century. Mr. Lucas or Mr. Thomas surely never had even a wild dream that a store like the present one would ever be on the site of their old fashioned grocery.

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
OF MIDDLEBOROUGH
("The Church at the Green")

THE CHURCH AT THE GREEN

By Lyman Butler

There have been many articles written about the Old White Church at the Green. Mostly these have been historical so I will try to put a little personal feeling into this one as it will be my own experiences. My mother was a member of the Baptist Church in town but when we lived out in the country it was quite a distance into town for services especially when we lived at Thompsonville so we attended services at the Green.

Back in those days more people attended the services than do today. Maybe not because they were more religious but it seemed the thing to do. There were not many Sundays that we missed either Church or Sunday School. We would hitch up the horse to the carry-all or sleigh whichever was in season. When we got to the Church grounds we would drive around back and put the horse in one of the sheds. I can see these now —long rows on both sides of the Chapel. If I remember correctly in those days Church started around ten-thirty and Sunday School was twelve to one. Mr. Cummings was the Minister over the years that I attended services here. As the big Church had no central heat, only stoves for heat in the real cold weather the services were held out back in the Chapel as they are at present even though now there is a hot air system, but there is a lot of Church to heat.

I went mostly to Sunday School and I guess at one time my mother taught some there. The teachers I remember most were Mrs. Buchanan and Mrs. Wade, both friendly ladies whom we all loved and respected. After moving out of Thompsonville back to Warrentown we attended the Central Baptist Church while in our teens.

After I first married we lived in town but after a few years I purchased the lot where I built the home in which I now live on East Main Street which brings me back to the Green section. Being so near to the old Church it was natural for us to have our children go to this Church that I attended as a youngster.

Of course I went some myself but must admit I could have stood a bit more. Mr. Cummings was still Minister and four of my five kiddos have Bibles with his wonderful handwriting in them. Of course things are different now. The old carriage sheds fell to decay and were never repaired as old dobbin was disappearing from the scene, as autos took over and they needed no protection from the elements.

So there have been many seasons roll around since I first attended this Church but outside of the carriage sheds being gone and a kitchen added to the Chapel there is no real difference since I went there as a kid.

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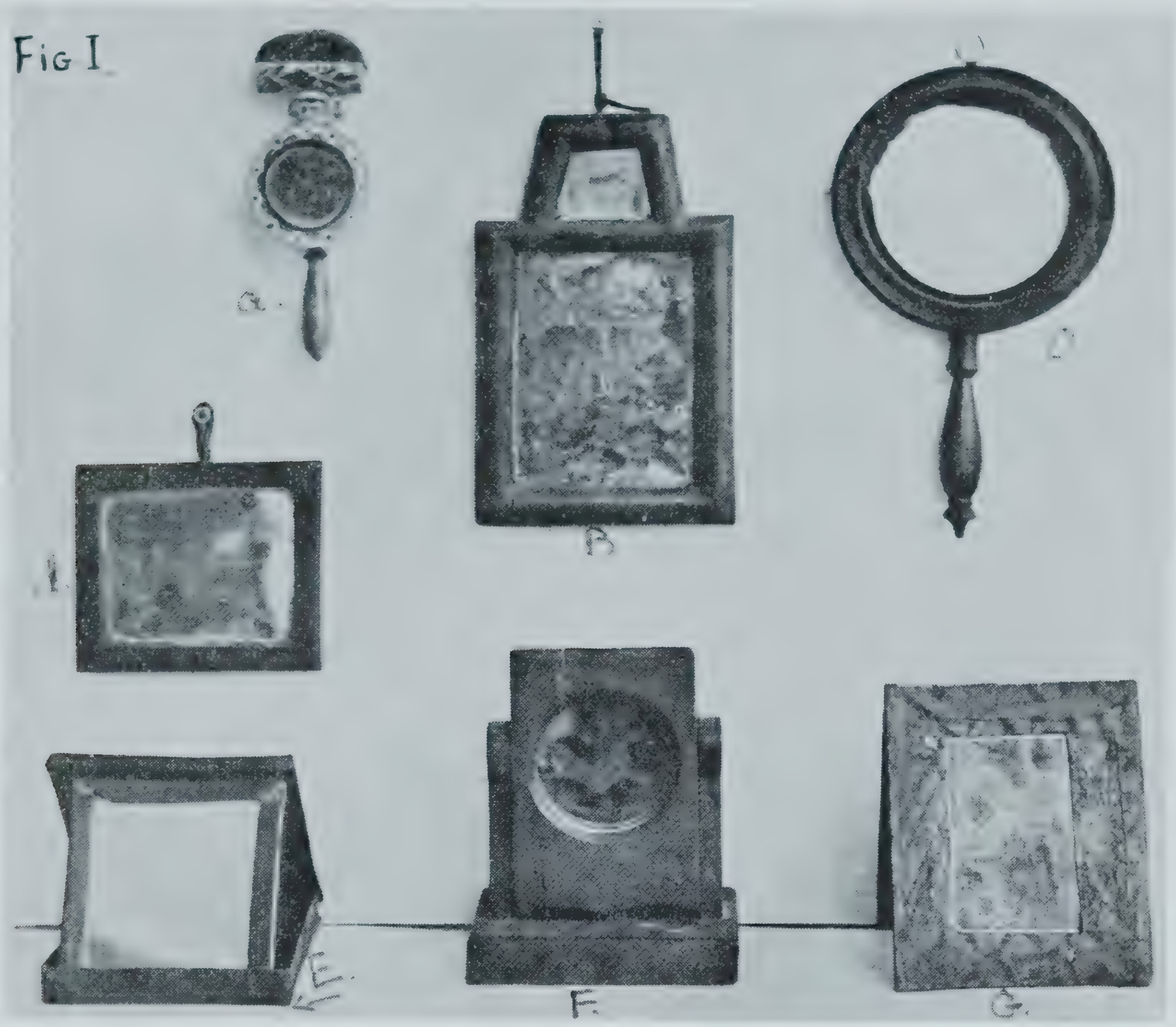


Fig. 1—Odd Mirrors. **a,** "Sewing bird" with mirror, European; inches. **b,** Courting type cut from a single pine board (**eighteenth century**); 5 by 6 inches. **c,** Hand-mirror frame, black walnut (**first half, nineteenth century**); 9½ inches. **d.** Mahogany frame in one piece (**c. 1800**); 4 by 5 inches. **e,** Homemade copper frame and box; 4½ inches square. **f,** Shaving mirror, homemade, black walnut (**nineteenth century**). **g,** Glass framed in old-time wall paper (**late eighteenth or early nineteenth century**); 4½ by 5½ inches.

Illustrations from the author's collection

TRIFLES—NOT INCONSIDERABLE

By Elizabeth F. Romaine

This collection of miniature, odd, curious and not inconsiderable mirrors about which Mrs. Romaine wrote in 1937, when it was very much in its infancy, has now grown to over thirty fine examples of American craftsmanship and imagination in design. It will eventually be preserved by our Historical Museum, and I hope to present our readers with details of more recent acquisitions since 1937 in a future issue of the Antiquarian; these would fill in many gaps from about 1725 to 1876. (Reprinted through the courtesy of The Magazine Antiques — May, 1937.)

Even among inveterate collectors almost nothing is heard about the attractions of small homemade mirrors. Yet, because of their very individuality and obscurity, these often crude objects exercise an appeal that is lacking to their larger and more formal relatives. Furthermore, examples of these little one-of-a-kind pieces are by no means unattainable; whereas their more magnificent cousins are well beyond the reach of most of us.

My interest in small mirrors was first aroused by a diminutive, crude, pine courting glass found in a New Jersey antique shop. Unluckily for my exchequer, it was one of those things that I "just have to have." So I yielded to temptation and acquired the piece (**Fig. 1b**). It is hollowed out from a single slab of pine about an inch thick, for the back is one with the frame. The glass is held in place by small points and brads. Its little upper "window" was occupied by a picture cut from a magazine. This I have replaced with a scrap of old mirror, in lieu of something better. When curiosity overcame me, I carefully removed the larger glass, and, to my delight, found it backed with a sheet of ancient newspaper printed in Pennsylvania German. I could not translate the musty notices disclosed, but the date 1779 was there, comprehensible in any language. I could also make out the words **Supreme Court of New Jersey,** and **Bergen, Essex, Gloucester,** and **Cape May.** So I have a clue to the general locality where my mirror was made and spent its early years. The rather complicated form of the frame is evidently due to the maker's attempt to emulate an old Dutch mirror or one of the small Chinese versions of which our colonial forebears seem to have been fond. This bit of internal evidence, coupled with that afforded by the dated newspaper, justifies the assumption that my first mirror find represents eighteenth-century whittling.

The mahogany mirror (**Fig. 1d**) is of the simplest construction. Like the example just described, it is made from a single piece of wood. Its glass is held in place with putty, which even curiosity hesitates to unseal. If secrets lie behind, they must remain inviolate. This is the smallest of my mirrors, as close to a miniature type as any in my collection. Its age is uncertain. Its aspect and the family tradition which came with it point to the very beginning of the 1800's, or slightly before. A pleasing feature is the leather thong, which passes through a diagonally bored hole in the back of the frame, to form a supporting loop.

The very plain pine frame in Figure **2c**, though not particularly striking, has points of interest. The frame is unusually wide for the size of the opening, and is much more deeply beveled than appears in the photograph. The back, instead of being covered with a thin strip of pine nailed on, is closed with a stout piece of rough board fitting neatly into a slot, so that the entire back is flush with the frame itself. Such deeply beveled frames, whether for pictures or for looking-glass, suggest the 1840's. In this instance, the interior padding is a New Jersey publication bearing a date in the fag end of 1839. The mirror itself comes from an old house near Flemington, New Jersey.

The mirror shown as Figure **2d** is faintly mysterious. Its history prior to its acquisition from a Cape Cod antique dealer is unknown. I am satisfied that it is genuine. This frame is of pine. Its surmounting crest is mortised into the molding and its scroll is pleasing, even though its top has been broken off and the jagged edge smoothed with a knife. Despite simplicity, the workmanship of the frame shows care and precision; and the maker was meticulous enough to number adjacent corners to ensure close fitting of his mitred joints. Such small details interest me more than the fine points of excellence in the furniture of well-known cabinetmakers. I feel safe in ascribing my mirror frame to some anonymous New England craftsman of the period between 1700 and 1720.

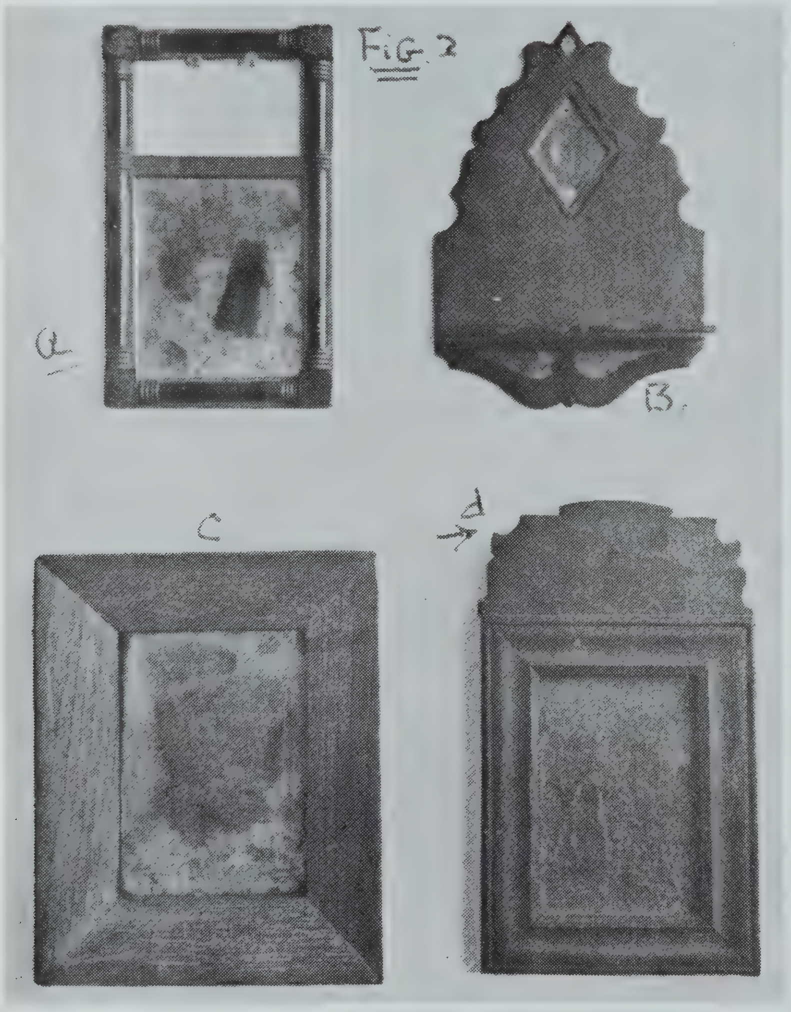


Fig 2—Odd Mirrors. **a**, Picture mirror **sans** picture, unusually small, 5½ by 9½ inches (**c. 1825**). b, Walnut toilet shelf with 2-inch mirror (**1885**). c, Beveled frame of pine (**c. 1840**); 8 by 10 inches. **d**, Early New England pine mirror (**1700-1720**); 6¾ by 11½ inches.

A recent addition to my collection is a small glass, mounted **passepartout** in old wallpaper, not unlike that found on the simpler bandboxes (**Fig. 1g**). A flap in the rear folds flat against the glass, or may be extended to support the piece on a dressing table. This odd item came from a Swansea, Massachusetts, attic, in a box containing other interesting things, among which were documents dated as early as 1761. I like to think that the mirror is at least nearly as old as its attic companions.

My latest find is a diminutive walnut shaving mirror (**Fig. 1f**). The fact that it may boast no great antiquity does not detract from its charm. It is quite tiny, measuring but 3¼ inches across, with a total height, including the foot, of 6 inches. Its parts are held together with screws, a circumstance that would at once blast it in the estimation of many collectors. Nevertheless, the uprights supporting the swinging glass are mortised and pegged into the thick base. The circular glass is in fair condition, old, and rather thick. The tops of the posts are neatly shaped into round heads through which pass the pivoting screws. Whatever its faults, this little mirror is almost my favorite. It has individuality, an attribute possessed by many relatively crude objects and one that the collector of trifles is permitted to recognize and enjoy.

Another not altogether unworthy member of the group I must mention. It is obviously of the jig-sawed walnut bracket era (**Fig. 2b.**) Perhaps the reader will not care to proceed further and learn that an inscription on the back proclaims the ignominy: **Made by G. W. Keen, March the 3rd, 1885.** Made probably for a boy's room, and provided with a shelf for brush and comb, this article of furniture may hardly have encouraged fastidiousness. Its glass measures only two inches across.

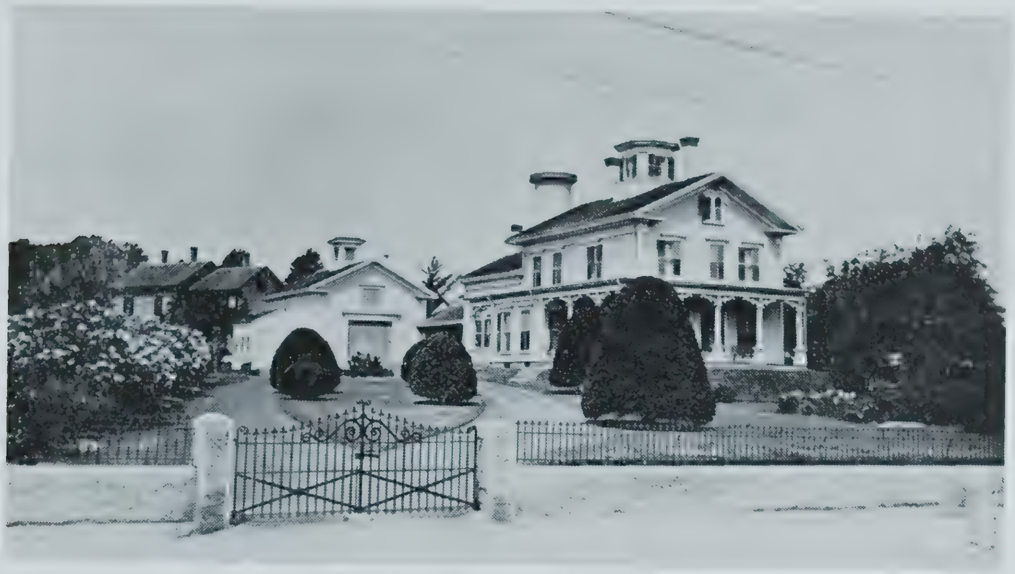
A curious version of the conventional "sewing bird" is another of my trifles. It is of wood, painted white and decorated in blue. A small mirror is attached. For this mirror I can find no good reason, save that of ornament. The "bird's" usual padded, velvet-covered top is stuffed with sawdust. The screw for adjusting the contrivnce to a table top is of wood. I may add that my gay little sewing bird has rendered me faithful assistance in many a needlework task. I suspect that it is of European peasant origin (**Fig. 1a**).

Clumsy, yet none the less pleasing, is a crude interpretation of an old traveling mirror in a case. This contrivance is of copper, folded around the corners of the glass, and soldered. The case hinges are of strap metal wrapped about a piece of wire. The whole affair is very heavy, in spite of its small size (**Fig. 1e**).

Round hand mirrors like the one pictured here are not unfamiliar. Mine, I regret to say, has lost its glass. I should like to know more of its age and origin. It is of black walnut, but nevertheless has good turnings and well-cut moldings. At a guess, I should place it early in the walnut era, perhaps in the 1830's.

The last mirror to be considered is the smallest of its type that I have ever run across. It is a "picture mirror," unfortunately without the picture. It measures only 5½ by 9½ inches. Compare these figures with those of a mirror of your own and you will understand why I cherish my somewhat impaired example. I have, of course, various other pieces which are interesting and unusual for one reason or another, but those illustrated here seem to me the most striking.

These examples indicate the possibilities open to the collector of what someone has called "farmhand mirrors." No matter where I travel, I always have a chance of finding a fresh example that I can hope to acquire. For no particular value attaches to such things, except in my own eyes. More often than not those of whom I buy them believe me to be suffering from some mild mania which, out of kindness, they try to humor. The world is full of equally genial oddments, of no great artistic consequence, yet possessed of a real attraction for him who will keep his eyes open and his vision unprejudiced.



ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL — 1920

ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL — 1920-1965

Excerpts from an address given by Mrs. Mertie E. Witbeck before St. Luke's Hospital Club, September 20, 1965.

"It is easy to take St. Luke's Hospital for granted; it seems to many of us that the hospital has always been here, but until 1920 Middleboro had no hospital. The doctors serving Middleboro had long promulgated the need of a hospital but it seemed too vast an undertaking for a small group to attempt to raise the thousands of dollars required for such a project.

MRS. JAMES E. PEIRCE (MARIA LOUISA HARLOW PEIRCE)

"Medical men of the town were organized as the "Doctor's Club," and undoubtedly members of this club made frequent calls on Mrs. James E. Peirce, the wealthiest woman in town, in an attempt to convince her an excellent use for a part of her fortune would be the establishment of a hospital for Middleboro. Mrs. Peirce was better known as Maria Louisa Harlow Peirce, her husband being a son of Colonel Peter H. Peirce and a brother of Thomas S. Peirce, the last surviving member of the family who left a half million dollars to our town. The doctors' visits were fruitful; when Mrs. Peirce died in 1918, she left a bequest of $100,000 for the construction and maintenance of a hospital in Middleboro. After other bequests in her will were cared for, the sum was reduced to $72,000. In the will there was a stipulation that the hospital be known as St. Luke's Hospital.

"Mrs. Peirce's fortune was placed in the hands of the Board of Trustees of Donations to the Protestant Episcopal Church of Massachusetts, and ever since the hospital has been established, a member of that Board has been one of the trustees of St. Luke's Hospital.

MR. JAMES E. PEIRCE

"In January of 1920, a meeting of the Doctor's Club with Mr. Paul Hubbard, representative of the Trustees of Donations of the Episcopal Church, was held in Judge Nathan Washburn's office. Plans for the new hospital were discussed and it was decided to purchase the Calvin D. Kingman estate on the corner of Oak and Centre streets. Mr. Kingman was a member of an old North Middleboro family. He first engaged in the manufacture of shoes in Lakeville, then became a partner of Charles E. Leonard and Horatio Barrows in a shoe factory in the Jones block on North Main street, after which he built a factory of his own on Centre street where now stands the block formerly known as the Cushing block and presently occupied by the Central Cafe. Mr. Kingman built one of the finest residences in Middleboro, the shoe factory and a large ranch in Colorado contributing to the fortune that made this possible. After Mrs. Kingman's death, the estate was settled just at the time a site was being sought for the new hospital. This beautiful residence became the nucleus of St. Luke's Hospital.

"On February 9, 1920, thirty-one of the seventy-four incorporators met and appointed fourteen trustees. Judge Nathan Washburn was elected the first president of the hospital. Elwyn B. Lynde was elected treasurer and has served in this office continuously for forty-five years with the exception of the five years he lived in California. The original medical staff consisted of Dr. Leonard A. Baker, Dr. James E. Burkhead, Dr. Charles S. Cummings and Dr. Alfred E. Elliott.

"The Kingman house was converted into a hospital of eight rooms to accommodate eighteen patients. Many of us can recall the operating room on the first floor with the operating table in the bay window. Over this in a similar room was a ward, and the two small rooms off the hall on the first floor were then a one-room ward. The tiny room behind the stairs was a patient's room as was the one at the top of the stairs. One room, sponsored by the Middleboro District Nursing Association was designated the Nina Seymour Room in honor of Miss Seymour, Middleboro's district nurse who enlisted in the First World War and died in Toul, France. Another was dedicated to Calvin D. Kingman. Various organizations of the town furnished the patients' rooms. In the first year the hospital served 112 patients, a decided contrast to the statistics of 1964 when the hospital cared for 4,337 cases. Of these 2,076 were bed patients, 1,000 emergency cases and the balance people using the facilities of the laboratory and x-ray departments.

"It was soon found a nurses' home was needed and in 1922 the barn of the Kingman estate was converted into living quarters. The small hospital continued to serve the town until 1928 when Mrs. Benjamin W. Shaw gave $20,000 for an addition. A one-story building was erected and christened the 'Shaw Building' and is that part of the hospital nearest the Kingman building. In 1936, a bequest of $150,000 was received in the will of Mrs. David G. Pratt of North Middleboro in memory of her husband, Hon. David G. Pratt. Of this sum, $50,000 was to be used for new construction and the balance invested for the benefit of the hospital. Each year $750 of this income is set aside to be used for free bed or beds for the inhabitants of Middleboro or others needing assistance. The will stated this should be known as the David Gurney Pratt Free Bed.

"Other endowment funds were added to the $50,000 bequest and a building campaign was conducted resulting in the construction of a two-story addition to the hospital costing $100,000. This building was opened in May, 1938, providing the hospital with a total of 32 beds and 15 bassinets for newborn babies. Again organizations of the town purchased furnishings for the patients' rooms. At this time the hospital had sufficient rooms so that the original hospital was converted into a nurses' home named the Kingman building, and the barn which had contained the home was moved onto Forest street and remodeled into apartments.

The hospital seems to outgrow itself about every ten years. The Shaw building was built in 1928, the Pratt building in 1938 and by 1948 the hospital had again outgrown its facilities. Plans were formulated for an expansion which were completed in 1954. In that year a fund-raising campaign was conducted which brought in $166,000. The new plans called for the construction of two wings, one to contain surgical facilities and the other to provide on the first floor new bed-space and on the second a maternity department. This gave the hospital 40 beds and 10 bassinets.

"The entire project cost approximately $250,000. The trustees of the hospital felt they had a very large indebtedness to be paid, but, as so often happens, doors opened in most unexpected places. The expensive x-ray equipment for the new x-ray department was donated by a former Middleboro resident. Wholly unexpectedly, $18,000 was received from the Ford Foundation. Gifts were received from individuals in the form of memorials, and generous contributions were given toward the new nursery dedicated to Dr. Edward L. Perry. The entire indebtedness was paid off in less than five years. In the summer of 1959 a party was held at the Mattapoisett cottage of Dr. and Mrs. James M. Bonnar where the mortgage was burned, a glorious occasion.

"It was thought the two new wings and the extensive renovations made in the existing structure in 1954 would take care of Middleboro's hospital needs for years to come, but again in 1965 the facilities of the hospital are outgrown and again plans are under way for a new building program."

ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL — 1966

MUSEUM NEWS

The old Seth Thomas clock given to us to preserve in the office has stopped, I think for the first time since it came to us from the treasurer's office in the Town Hall! Directors, curators and helpers rush in and out again for one or two errands — filing reports, checking some unlocated relic or bit of information, hastily depositing ancient rugs, furniture, buttons, and other contributions that still stream in from our loyal friends — but the ice box atmosphere is not conducive to sitting down at the typewriter and working. The old clock is resigned to its fate, but come Spring, will carry on as faithfully as ever. I miss the tick every time I run in and out — by George — January 1966 — I think I'll set it and keep it going after all.

Looking out the office window — with the old clock ticking again on this bright sunny January 4th — I can see the old granite blocks that once served as a fence around the Kingman property, now St. Luke's Hospital grounds, set in place for our new building. The Sproat Tavern Outhouse nestles under the weeping willow behind the first house, the stakes wait patiently to ouline the foundation for Judge Wood's Law Office (Illustration page one Volume VII, No. 4), and over in the farther corner next to the parking lot a ghost has just appeared! We **MAY** have another house given to us during 1966. If the ghost materializes, it will be a small 18th century Cape Cod type building very like our South Main street 1771 home known as the Silas Wood house (see Antiquarian for June 1962, Vol. IV, No. 3), now being restored.

Sometimes, even in a "refrigerator" in the dead of Winter, life can look bright and be a challenge, if there are windows through which to dream of Spring. The old Seth Thomas is "right on the button," and I feel that the Middleborough Historical Museum will survive to bring its educational message to future generations. I hope as time goes on our community will "pitch in" and help even more to carry on the work down here on Jackson street.

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ACQUISITIONS

We seldom have proper proveniance with gifts and contributions, but this time Mrs. Jeanette Bigelow had the whole story! Only two small buttons and yet with their history right on the little old red card to which they had been sewed years ago. The only trouble is that James King Sr. isn't mentioned in Weston's History. All we are sure of is that the buttons were discovered in an old house on Lovell street, recently restored by Mrs. Bigelow. However, the details are a challenge to the historian. The card reads: "James King Sr. served in the War of 1812 — died Nov. 28, 1868." Under one button is written: "Military Button of 1812 from Grandpa's Army Coat." Under the other: "A button from Grandfather King's homespun coat." Can anyone fill us in on the life of James King Sr., — perhaps of Middleborough?

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Winthrop are still bringing treasures, presented in memory of Mrs. Winthrop's sister, Mrs. Horace K. Atkins. Two fine early pastels ca, 1820, two fine oriental rugs —one an 18th century Persian over 200 years old, and the other a semi-antique oriental of the Victorian period. These two rugs have made a great change in the appearance of our two parlors in the "first" house, and you'll just have to drop in to appreciate them and see what color can do for a room.

Acquisitions, contributions or gifts, whichever you choose to call them, keep pouring in, and as we have explained many times, our two small houses are bulging; I'm beginning to be afraid that by the time the new building is finished next June, it will be "bulged before it's built!" However, as mentioned in MUSEUM NEWS, the "ghost" may save the day.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew M. Wood have filled the **Children's Room** to overflowing. The colorful railroad train and circus blocks steam along almost one whole shelf! The little red decorated cart that T. M. Wood played with as a youngster, five small children's chairs of various periods in the 19th century, the marble collection (some with birds and animals blown in, perhaps at Sandwich (?)) from the clay "miggles" to the striped glass "aggies" and "shooters" are an exhibit of which we are indeed proud, not to mention a fine pair of mahogany fiddlebacks, a fine pair of Hitchcocks, and — Great Scott — as the auction notices proclaim, "other articles far too numerous to mention." Drop in SEE — come one, come all.

Miss Helen Perry has presented us with a fine Sandwich glass cane, and Mr. and Mrs. Hiram Haley a flag adopted by Congress in 1799 to be used by the Revenue Marine Service, now our Coast Guard; this is displayed in the Military Exhibit prepared by our assistant curator Ted Eayrs last Summer. Mrs. Mildred Badger gave us a fine old bookcase now "loaded to the gunnels" with toys in the **Children's Room.** Mrs. Ernest Pratt, ever mindful of the future of the museum, has given us a doll carriage filled with doll's clothing, a cast iron kettle and a stone mason's hammer — among many other gifts this past year. Mrs. Helen Wood Ashley contributed a collection of individual salts made at Sandwich, and Mrs. Noel Hammond of Portsmouth, Rhode Island, (through the courtesy of Mrs. Irving R. Hardy) a copy of the History of the First Congregational Church of Middleborough. Miss Elsie Cahoon presented us with an imported glass perfume bottle, purchased at the Tom Thumb auction by Elmer Drew, and given to her in 1932; she also gave us two song books and one on the opera.

SAMPSON BRICKYARD

By Lyman Butler

Although nearly all the walls are obliterated by now, if you look real close as you go down Everett Street in the low land across the street from the old George Sampson place, across the railroad tracks you will see what is left of the old brick kiln of what we knew as Sampson's Brickyard. Not too many years ago there was also part of the old chimney still standing but that is now long gone.

As the town history mentions this old time business briefly not elaborating on it maybe I can tell a little about the place after this book was published. Originally this brickyard was operated by Calvin Murdock and he ran it for many generations. Later it came into possession of Deacon Sampson who ran it for some time, it being willed to his son George when he passed on. Some years before and at the turn of the twentieth century this was a very busy industry and employed several men.

There were several houses put up near the yard in which most of the help lived. These have all disappeared and only holes remain to tell where they stood. There are many small ponds around where the clay was dug out for the bricks. There are fish in these ponds and when I was young I went there fishing although it was not popular with me as there were too many water snakes around and snakes and I don't mix, but I understand that people still fish there today. In all probability if they had the digging equipment then that they have today this yard could have kept going many more years as there is no limit how deep you can dig today, even under water, which was the main obstacle at that time.

After the bricks were molded they had to be rolled in a very fine sand before being put in the kiln, so as not to stick together or to the trays they were baked in. The sand for this operation came from the pit just past the railroad towards Lakeville near the outlet to the new Cape highway. E. L. Cook in Titicut also hauled sand from this area as the texture was ideal for rolling bricks.

Elija Ober who lived opposite George Sampson and Charles Shaw who lived in Warrentown, used to team this sand to the brickyard with two-horse dump wagons. This was around the turn of the Century, and their wagons were similar to the earlier dump trucks which came along considerably later.

Each wagon would hold about two cubic yards or so and the drivers had to load his own load. Mr. Shaw says that he and Elija would help each other load the wagons and trail along together to the brickyard. For this they were paid one dollar and a half a load and they made three trips a day. Not a very big day's pay for two horses, a driver and the use of the wagon but in those days when you took home your whole pay with no tax out it was fair pay.

A few years later Mr. Sampson sold the business to the Eastern Brick Co. which already owned the brickyard in East Bridgewater. This company operated the yard a few years then shut down and took their business to East Bridgewater. The buildings were left to deteriorate as nature saw fit. So ended another old time industry which at one time was the bread and butter of many men for beside the men who worked at the yard steady there were wood choppers and teamers who hauled in the wood to feed the hungry fires of the kilns as well.

LOCAL LINES GLEANED FROM SOME OLD NEWSPAPERS

Nemasket Gazette June 12, 1857

Published by Stillman Pratt

PICKENS BROTHERS. Bonnets, bloomers and hats. The subscribers have at their establishment bonnets of all kinds, men's and boys' hats, ladies and misses bloomers, wholesale and retail.

Middleboro Gazette and Old Colony Advertiser July 9, 1859

Stillman Pratt, editor and proprietor

New Catechism — 1859 (not very different from 1965)
What is the chief end of man?
Money.
Who is most worthy of esteem?
He who dresses best, drives the fastest horses, has the largest deposit in the bank.
Is any respect due to simple integrity?
None whatever.

Middleboro News January 26, 1882

Henry H. Sylvester, editor and publisher

The new Thatcher building has gone up.

The Catholic Temperance Society held a hop in Thatcher's block on Friday evening.

The Cold Water Army meets next Saturday afternoon at Academy Hall. The ladies who have it in charge ask attendance of all the children.

Middleboro News August 16, 1886

William W. Wood, editor

The Brockton Gazette says the new depot at Middleboro is going to be a beauty.

The stone watering trough at the Star Mills is being placed high enough to allow horses to be watered without unchecking.

All members of the Nemasket Cemetery Improvement Society who wish to take a pleasure excursion are invited to meet Saturday evening at 7:30 o'clock.

Middleboro News February 10, 1894

Published by M. M. Copeland

The resignation of Uncle John Morton from his fat $400 salary position as postmaster at Rock results in a lively contest for the place.

February 24, 1894

GEORGE T. RYDER & CO. Sale of good style dress ginghams, regular price 10c per yard, to be closed out at 5c per yard. Ladies grey jersey vests and pants, cheap at 50c, to be sold at 25c to close.

Middleboro Gazette June 18, 1897

Wood and Tinkham, publishers

Several members of the W.C.T.U. started Tuesday for Marshfield Hills to attend the county convention. But, alack, they never arrived, finding it impossible to make train connections for that remote South Shore hamlet, so they went to Nantasket Beach for the day instead.

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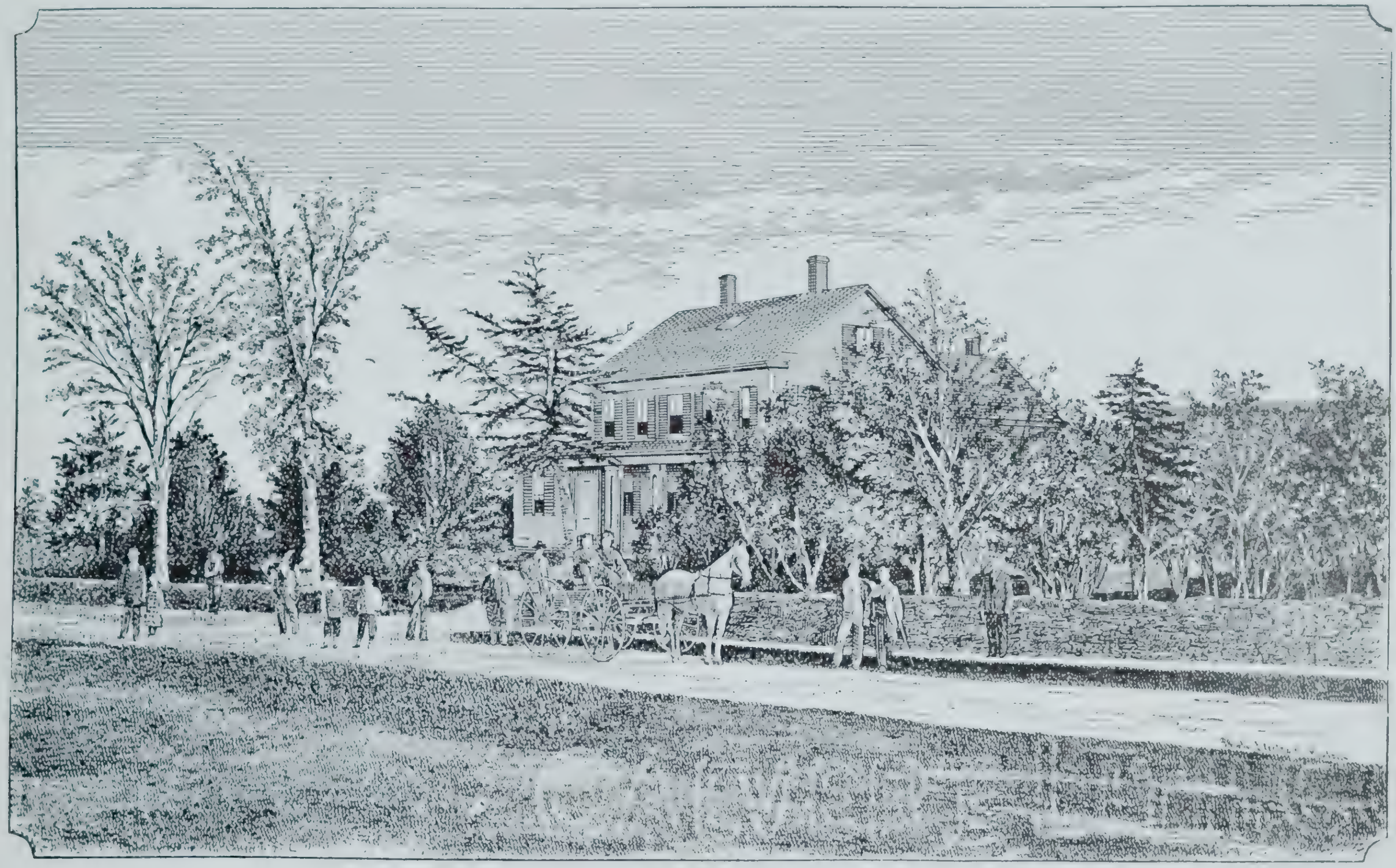
VOLUME VIII APRIL 1966 NUMBER 2



Eaton Family School, Middleboro, Mass.

THE EATON FAMILY SCHOOL
1863-1897

The Eaton Family School held a unique place among private schools of the period. Pupils came from far and near. Biographies of many older residents of the community who became prominent in the affairs of the town and state often include the statement, "He obtained his early education at the Eaton School."

The school was founded in 1863 by Reverend and Mrs. P. L. Cushing in their home on East Grove street and continued in that location as long as the school was in existence. The title, "Family School" was used because it was intended to accept only a few pupils who would live in the Cushing home, receiving their education and at the same time enjoying family living. Before long the number of day pupils exceeded those who came to board with the Cushing family.

In 1874, Amos H. Eaton came from Norridgewock, Maine, to take over the school, having purchased it with his father, Reverend Herrick M. Eaton of Westerly, Rhode Island. Mr. Eaton, with an older brother, Hamlin F., had been conducting a similar school in Norridgewock.

The requirements and rules of the Eaton Family School are interesting:

"Pupils will furnish their own towels and other articles for their personal toilet. Each one should be provided with a Bible, a dictionary, a slate, an umbrella and rubbers."

"Reading, spelling, penmanship, vocal music, drawing and recitations all will be expected to participate in, the first three being daily exercises."

"No pupil whose influence is injurious to the others will be allowed to remain in the family." (In the list of students given in each catalog, an asterisk beside a name indicated he had been dismissed from the school because of misconduct.)

Some of the advantages of the school as set forth in the catalogs were:

CONVENIENCE OF ACCESS

Middleboro can be readily reached from the Cape by Cape Cod Railway; from Taunton, Providence and vicinity by the Taunton branch; from Fall River and New York by the Fall River line; from Plymouth via Plymouth and Middleboro railroad; and from Boston by New York, New Haven and Hartford railroad over which there are twenty trains daily.

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HEALTHFULNESS

No more beautiful location can be found in Massachusetts than Middleboro. The soil is light and sandy, the surrounding forests are mostly pine, and the prevailing winds come directly from the waters of Buzzards Bay. Added to this, there is an abundant supply of the purest water.

LOCATION

The location of the buildings is on the southern edge of the village, far enough away to give all the benefits of a residence in the country, and still near enough to obtain the advantages of the village as it is less than ten minutes walk to the railroad station and fifteen to the postoffice and churches.

NUMBER OF PUPILS

The small number of pupils enables the members of the school to be treated as members of the family, so that good manners as well as good morals can be inculcated.

For a number of years, Miss Nellie P. Nichols was engaged as an elocution and Physical culture instructor, Miss M. A. Overhiser as teacher of piano and Mrs. Dora P. Leonard, vocal teacher. Mrs. Amos H. Eaton served as matron of the school.

On September 6, 1878, a kindergarten was opened in the school. The names of the sixteen pupils are interestingly familiar:

Johnnie H. Alden
Freddie A. Barrows
Hattie Briggs
Estelle B. Coombs
Edna M. Dickson
Besse A. Eaton
Emmie J. Eaton
Hannah Harlow
Arthur B. Harlow
Lydia D. Kingman
Sadie B. Kingman
Howard Ryder
Mabel L. Tobey
Lizzie Tobey
Harry Wood
Maude Willoughby

In the prospectus of 1895-1896, Mr. Eaton announced because of the increasing number of day scholars, school-room accomodations were insufficient. Arrangements were made for school and recitation rooms in the brick building then known as the Copeland Block (now the Glidden building). These rooms would accomodate sixty pupils. The expenses of the day school were as follows:

Tuition for nine weeks

English	$12.00
Latin	5.00
French	5.00
Stationery and books	Free
Instrumental music	Extra
Elocution	Extra

COPELAND BLOCK, MIDDLEBORO.

THE MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleborough, Mass.
VOLUME VIII 1966 Number 2

Lawrence B. Romaine — Editor
Mertie E. Witbeck — Associate Editor
Miss Martha J. Howard — Proof Reader

Museum open July through September and by appointment.

Adults .50
Children, 12 and under .10

Historical Association annual memberships $3.00 single, $5.00 married couples. Memberships include the Middleborough Antiquarian, quarterly, and also the privileges of the museum free.
Subscriptions to The Antiquarian $2.00 annually.
Miss Ruth Gates — Corresponding Secretary
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All gifts to the Historical Association and Museum are tax deductible under Federal Income Tax Law.

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Vice President — Albert T. Maddigan
Treasurer — Mrs. Harold M. Pratt
Secretary — Pauline Blanchard
Chairman, Museum Committee — Mertie E. Witbeck
Museum Curator — Lawrence B. Romaine
Director — Harold A. Hall
Director — Henry B. Burkland
Director — Ernest Judge

Beginning in 1885, there were annual reunions of former pupils organized as "The Eaton School Association." Tickets were $100 each for "such exercises and entertainment as the committee find it is within their power to provide." The ticket always included dinner, and sometimes literary exercises at the Y.M.C.A., in the afternoon and a promenade and dance in the evening. As the membership grew in size, the receptions and dances were held in the Town Hall. If weather permitted, dinner was served on the lawn at the school; otherwise it was laid in the school-room. Samuel S. Bourne, who had bakeries in Middleboro and Onset, was the caterer.

Most of the pupils were from Middleboro and surrounding towns. Some came from towns on the Cape and the catalogs listed names from western Massachusetts, all of the New England states, New York and as far away as Virginia and New Brunswick.

Amos H. Eaton became one of Middleboro's best loved and respected citizens. In 1897 he gave up school teaching and in March, 1898, was appointed town clerk, treasurer and collector of taxes. Much interested in the construction and maintenance of the town's water system, he was elected to the Board of Water Commissioners, serving as chairman of the Board for fifteen years. Mr. Eaton died March 31, 1910, at the Homeopathic Hospital in Boston where he had undergone an operation.

It was said of Mr. Eaton: If one's true wealth is measured by his friends, then Amos H. Eaton was the wealthiest man in the community.

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MUSEUM NEWS

The old Seth Thomas clock that served many a town treasurer, now serving in our museum office, is still going. The slow measured tick welcomes those of us who have occasion to drop in with acquisitions or to check for leaks or other possible Winter damage to our two ancient buildings. It makes one feel that the place is alive, waiting patiently for Spring—the return of people working, cleaning and setting up new exhibits—and the smiling visitors who respond to its timely message every day through the Summer season.

In the costume room beside the office, our models stand like ghosts, shrouded in their plastic covers that protect them from dirt and dust; perhaps they are cheered by the old Seth Thomas, hoping that once again they can step out and show their true colors—who knows? In the weaving or textile room Levi Peirce and his Spouse look down from their frames and seem to frown on the mess of boxes and cartons in which quilts and fabrics have been stored for the Winter; truly I don't blame them—but how could Cephas Thompson have given them that dissatisfied look so long ago? There is a beautiful spread just arrived, the gift of Mrs. Bass. And I almost forgot while in the Costume Room, there are two petticoats and a waist, donations from Mrs. Roger Tillson and Mrs. Bass.

Wandering through the Gay Ninety Kitchen into the Military Exhibit, we find a Revolutionary cartridge box just received from Mrs. Roger Tillson, and passing into our G.A.R. Room, we find the complete records of the Women's Relief Corps, Auxiliary of the G.A.R., given to our library by Mrs. Ruth W. Andrews. Through the Library and into the Peirce Store we find all quiet—but, what is this huge tin? Well, well, old brown homemade soap! Just presented to the Store by Mrs. Guy Brackett. That museum mouse won't have a chance—the top is tight.

Across the winter browned grass, past Ernest Pratt's ice scrapers, Mrs. Tom Thumb's monument to her ancestor General Warren, the old Sproat Tavern outhouse under the weeping willow and into the other house. Here there is no Seth Thomas ticking, but I think I can still hear it doing duty for all our museum buildings. In the Tom Thumb rooms we find some clippings and two photographs just sent to us by George Gloss of the famous old Brattle Bookshop in Boston. Is there no end? NO—there's the telephone again—our Fire Department has found an 1874 Middleborough map; do we want it? SURE.

At this point I am reminded of the NEW BUILDING, and realizing just HOW IMPORTANT IT IS. Where are we going to place the collection of farm implements, tools, the fine old cobbler's bench, and ox sling that are coming to us next month through the generosity and thoughtfulness of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Soule. This morning we managed to squeeze in a fine group of memorabilia given to us by Mrs. Walter Channing of Marion. The early lathe with its huge wooden wheel is in the carpenter's shop with a neat old jig-saw, woodworking machine, and also a small wooden contrivance, homemade, to trim something! More about this when I find out what! The lathe came from the old Sparrow home on Plympton street near The Green, and was undoubtedly Fred C. Sparrow's constant companion as a carpenter and builder. The child's wooden stenciled wheelbarrow was her grandmother's, and is in our Children's Room. The fine old wooden, iron studded, oak framed corn sheller is temporarily "stuffed" in the Lincoln street entrance to the Assistant Curator's office. (I can hear his comments about this when he returns from Olivet College to take up his duties next June!) (Mrs. Walter Channing, Daughter of John Beldon of Marion, known to many of us through the years, has presented the museum many fine pieces.)

Time is short, Seth Thomas reminds me, and, what is worse, we are again running out of space,—as usual.

FLASH. NEW HISTORICAL MUSEUM BUILDING FUND TOPS $1,900., and even with a few paid bills to date stands at $1,828.95. DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP — WE NEED $2,500.00, and, the job MUST be roofed and ready by June! Acquisitions are still pouring in (See the Middleborough Gazette for March 10th—the museum mouse is having difficulty moving around in his walls! They are bulging!) Remember when we started from scratch — and our loyal supporter Albert Thomas doubled the first $500.00? We CAN'T stop here — are you with us? Shall I send you another little envelope from our Ways and Means Committee with the picture of the NEW BUILDING?? Just make the checks out to the MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL MUSEUM, or to THE MIDDLEBOROUGH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, INC. That's all.

BENSON'S HARNESS SHOP

by Lyman Butler

As you travel down Wareham street from the Four Corners and pass Clifford street you see a decidedly different looking spot than when I was a kid. Where Cannon's parking lot is there were two houses, one of which was moved to Warrentown at the foot of Snow Hill, the other to Carpenter street, and where the garage stands there were two little buildings which I remember well as George Benson's Harness Shop, formerly F. C. Norris's Shop, and W. F. Deane Woodworking Shop. My better half reminds me that the harness shop was moved to Lakeville to become part of Mahar's cloth remnant store. I remember the harness shop clearly because my father used to stop once in a while to get some part of a harness fixed when he used to peddle vegetables for George Morse, and I used to go along for the ride.

At the time of the horse and buggy Mr. Benson was very busy and the shop was filled with harness to be repaired. Of course everything was done by hand. I used to enjoy watching him sew in the little vise which he worked by his foot and clamped onto the part of harness to be repaired. He would take the thread and wax it good by drawing a length through a wax cake a few times and taper off the ends so they were almost like needles. After skiving a groove with a special tool he would take a sharp awl and punch a hole through the pieces to be sewed together and insert the pointed thread one end on one side and one in the other, then pull them tight, making a very neat seam. On heavy pieces big brass rivets were also used to strengthen the harness.

With the coming of the auto you might think that the harness making business would fade away, but that was not so, for the first autos had leather fan belts of various widths and when the generators came in they were belt driven. These wore out or had to be repaired quite often so Mr. Benson still used his vise as though making harness parts.

Eventually some firms came out with a canvas belt and later rubber and canvas moulded in one continuous length, so gradually this phase of the business went out. Mr. Benson used to repair the curtains of the covered carryalls and he was right back in another line, for nearly all of the first autos around here were open cars and had a set of side curtains which were stored under the cushions of the seats.

That is the way my Model T was anyway and I know others were. There was wear and tear on these curtains and sometimes the fixtures would pull away from the canvas and require stitching. Mr. Benson had a sewing machine which he pedaled for power for this purpose. He also replaced the celluloid glass in the curtains. This kept him pretty busy in the bad weather but in the summer it was a little quieter. There were still quite a few farm horses around so he was able to make a living. There were not many harness shops around by now and people came to his shop from surrounding towns for all kinds of leather work.

At the time he gave up he was still doing a good business and what with all the saddle horses today a shop might do well.

As for the wood working shop I never had any work done here, but I used to glance in the door sometimes and watch Mr. Dean making frames, screens, mouldings etc.

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HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF NORTH MIDDLEBORO

By Ethel Richmond Penniman

To the northwest of Middleboro Center lies an area of the town bordering the Taunton river for several miles. From unrecorded time it has been known as Titicut, but with what pronunciation by the original Indian inhabitants it is now hard to say. The early white men, whose English spelling was extremely variable, attempting to render Indian sounds with English letters, recorded at least six spellings of Titicut. It was a place beloved by the Indians for centuries and such cultivated fields as still remain near the second bend of the river may have been in agricultural use for over a thousand years. The records of that era were preserved by Nature and Time, and have been uncovered for many years, a bit at a time, by searchers for Indian artifacts and at another time by a group of "diggers", otherwise known as archaeologists. The area called Titicut has had as much history connected with it as many an entire town. For that reason the best way to approach it in small space may be to speak of some outstanding personalities of different periods.

The first to leave a written record of their admiration for Titicut were none other than a pair of Pilgrims, Edward Winslow and Stephen Hopkins. Six months after Plymouth Rock had a claim to historic glory thrust upon it by the tread of Pilgrim feet, Winslow and Hopkins "slept here" at Fort Hill in Titicut. It was definitely not a restful night as they were much troubled by "muskitoes" and the Indian habit of singing themselves to sleep. But such was the beauty of the landscape that even tired Pilgrims were moved to record the seeming richness of soil judged by six-foot weeds in neglected Indian fields. Of the forest they wrote, "though it be wilde. . . . . .the trees stand not thicke, but a man might well ride a horse among them." How beautiful must have been this virgin forest of trees centuries old. It is a high price that we pay for what we believe is civilization! Nowhere in Massachusetts now can one find a landscape such a Titicut was in its original beauty.

The original inhabitants left no written record of their thoughts, their actions or their names — except for three of whom I shall speak later. Gradually the white settlements closed in upon them in a kind of pincers movement with Middleboro and Bridgewater settled from Plymouth, and Taunton (which included Raynham) settled from Dorchester and Boston. The Indians of Titicut were already only the remnants of a tribe because a white man's disease (probably small-pox) had reached them before they even laid eyes on a member of the white race. The few remaining seem to have become a group of "praying Indians," that is, they adopted the white man's religion, probably because his God seemed stronger than theirs. Thus when King Philip's War broke out in 1675, we find no record of Titicut Indians joining Philip. Fighting took place, however, along the river, for it was the highway from the Indians' Narragansett haunts to the inland settlements. At one time a white military expedition took a fairly large number of Indian prisoners near the ford close to Fort Hill, and toward the close of the war an uncle of Philip's was shot at the ford. Philip was then in retreat toward Narragansett and the Great Swamp fight where he died.

About this time the Titicut Indians got a present. They were officially endowed by the colonial legislature with a piece of their own property! The bounds were definitely set as extending from an oak tree which, even within my own memory, stood on Centre street in North Middleboro, perhaps six or eight rods westward of its intersection with Pleasant street. If a bird flew southward it could have gone about two miles to reach the southern end of this first "Indian Reservation," a point near Poquoy Brook where Bristol and Plymouth Counties now meet. It is also the meeting point of Lakeville, Middleboro and Taunton. Although so definitely set, I believe there must have been some leniency in interpreting these lines, for eventually, in 1774, we have recorded three Indian's names, at the time seeming to have some claim to what is now the center area of North Middleboro.

We should like to know the names of the very first white settlers in the area, and where their houses stood, but I have never seen a record of them. Since the beginning of settlement, the people on the Bridgewater side of the river and on the Middleboro side felt more in common with one another than with their respective towns, and several times requested the colonial legislature for permission to join and become a separate town. They were always refused, but at last in 1744 were granted permission to become "Titicut Parish," which meant they could build a church of their own and not have to attend services in their town centers.

Here we have a list of names of people who signed the request for a parish: Shaw, Leach, Eaton, Hooper, Keith, Crossman, Washburn, Fobes, Bryant, Harvey, Cowins, Aldrich, Casewell (probably Caswell) Edson, Perkins, Thurston, Richmond, Leonard. It will be noted that the name of Pratt, later so widely identified with North Middleboro, is missing. Nevertheless, there was one of this name in business on the Bridgewater side, probably by the 1740's. Perhaps he claimed residence in Bridgewater then, and so did not sign the petition. The Pratt family originally came to Weymouth where three generations were born. A Benjamin Pratt migrated to Bridgewater and in that town was born a second Benjamin.

Modern inhabitants would scarcely consider the location ideal for a ship-building and coast-wise shipping headquarters, but the river then was a highway as it was in Indian times, and within Titicut Parish Benjamin Pratt built ships of forty to fifty tons, and, sailing down the river into Narragansett Bay, established a flourishing coastal trade to the Southern colonies. As was frequently the case in that area, he eventually made a very poor trade — death for himself and three sons in the form of yellow fever. A fourth son, William, I assume had been left at home, for he survived to settle up the business of father and brothers. Perhaps after such an outcome he reflected that "homekeeping hearts are happiest," not to say safer! At any rate, he decided to stay on dry land and with this object in view, gradually created a four hundred acre farm. Farming, however, was only one of his many activities. Perhaps he tried to carry out all the careers his lost brothers might have had. After getting permission from the legislature to dam the river for water power, he built a grist-mill, a saw-mill, a fulling mill and a linseed oil mill. He ran a store, a blacksmith shop and a shoemaking shop. In the time he had left from running a farm and six industries, he devoted himself to being a captain of militia, and a "strong concern for religion." Occasionally, also he built a ship. He certainly proved that in those days there were men to match the trees in Titicut. One might wonder how he administered so much, even with many hired hands, but actually his mills were probably very small and did not work like modern mills on a weekly schedule the whole year through.

In the same decade that William Pratt began his host of occupations and thus set the stage for Titicut as an industrial area, a man who was to become a personality in the religious field arrived. The inhabitants having received permission in 1744 to build a church, did not get on with it very fast in spite of encouragement from remaining Indians. The praying Indians had a little church building about one-eighth of a mile up Pleasant street from the green. Three who remained (possibly the only ones left) must have had some claim to the area outside the Indian boundaries. At any rate, they now saved their own identities and perhaps that of all the praying Indians from anonymity by giving land for the proposed church. The land of Titicut Parish Green, including the cemetery and where the church, the school, the parsonage and several houses now stand, was the gift of James Thomas, Job Ahanton and Stephen David. These are the only personal names of Titicut Indians which have come down to us. The gift was recorded in church and town records. Over one hundred years later, a minister of the Congregational church became interested in these early founders from another race. It was known that one at least was buried in the cemetery by the church and, led by this minister, the church members and villagers erected a monument to all three.

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The church building was finished in 1749, a very small plain building, not at all like a church as thought of today. After much prayer and no hurry, Mr. Isaac Backus of Norwich, Connecticut, was called as Pastor. He was very active both physically and mentally. He was to change the course of events in North Middleboro and a few other places, and he did his best to change the course of American history. He had been here but a short time when he began to feel that the convictions of the people later called Baptists, were nearer to true religion for him, and he attempted to carry his congregation with him. He only succeeded in splitting it. For a time he conducted meetings in the then standing old Indian church, later in a new building, but it was not until many years later that they moved to the present site of the Baptist Church on Bedford street.

It is rare to have so many relics of a distant time survive in a village as they have in North Middleboro. The dwelling house of Rev. Backus still stands on Plymouth street. There are still some of his descendants in North Middleboro and some in nearby towns. We may hope others survive, for during the war a sailor from California temporarily stationed on the East coast appeared one Sunday at the Baptist church. His name was Backus. He knew something of his ancestry and had hunted up the old home and church of his ancestor of two hundred years ago. Whether or not this young man survived the war, I do not know. The original Mr. Backus wrote many books, among them a "History of New England," which became a source book for later historians. Most of his books concerned his own opinions on condition of his 18th century world and frequently reveal him far ahead of his times in many respects. The title of one book was "True Policy Requires Equal Religious Liberty;" of another, "Godliness Excludes Slavery." Colonial Massachusetts required from everyone the payment of a state religious tax which went to support the Congregational church. People could belong to other churches, but they still had to pay this tax. Mr. Backus spent years trying to alter the situation. You may be cynical and consider that he took this stand only because he was a Baptist, but he always in writing and speaking held the broader view that until there was NO state church, true religious freedom could not exist.

In 1774 he was sent to the Continental Congress at Philadelphia and urged the establishment of this type of freedom, but Congress had more immediate problems, so he accomplished little. After the Revolution, Mr. Backus was a member of the Convention which established the Constitution of the United States. Here he was prominent in a group which tried to have an article written into it forbidding slavery, but other influences were too strong. When it came time for the states to ratify the Constitution, he was a member among 355 delegates who considered its adoption by Massachusetts in 1788. There were twenty-three ministers in the group. A few delegates from country districts complained that the proposed Constitution denied God because it had no religious tests for public office. It speaks well for the clergy of Massachusetts that, led by Mr. Backus, the objection was defeated. Mr. Backus, speaking for the clergy, said, "In reason and in the Holy Scripture, religion is ever a matter between God and the individual; the imposing of religious tests for public office has ever been the engine of tyranny in this world."

Mr. Backus used to go on long missionary trips as far as the Carolinas or northward into New Hampshire. I have seen the saddle flasks which he carried on winter journeys, and thinking of winter in New Hampshire, I cannot begrudge the Reverend Backus — indeed, I hope he had something really WARMING in them!

Mr. Backus died in 1806 aged eighty-three. He lies quite near the three Indians who gave land for the Congregational Church which first called him to North Middleboro. The monument is pulpit-shaped with an open Bible on top. It was erected by the Old Colony Baptist Society. Women might like to know something of this very busy man's home life. He was married on November 29, 1749. Of this happy union he wrote many years later, "Susanna Mason of Rehobeth became the companion of my life for nearly fifty-one years, and the greatest temporal blessing God ever gave me, for which I shall praise Him to eternity." All of their nine children lived to adult years, a record in that era, so we know the parents must have given them fine constitutions, devoted care, and we should guess — joy.

(To be continued in the next issue of the Antiquarian)

LOOKING BACK

by Lyman Butler

Back along when we lived in Warrentown there were no rubbish collections as we know them today. Everyone had to dispose of their rubbish wherever they could. I remember we had a dump on the edge of the woods as far away from the house as possible. Evidently some of the neighbors hid theirs in the woods too, for when we took hikes we would come upon dumps along the sides of the old wood roads.

One day I recall very well we came upon a brand new dump. We found several part empty cans of paint of various colors, and a few old brushes which we promptly took home. We thinned it with kerosene and then proceeded to paint the back of the outdoor plumbing and the barn. When Father came home that night he decided the buildings looked better without our paint. That ended our new painting business.

Shortly after this my sister and a couple of neighbors' youngsters found a dump that was the prize of them all. It seems that one of our neighbors, Mr. George H. Wilbur used to have a photograph studio at 45 Centre street, and when he closed up he had on hand a lot of unclaimed pictures. We found hundreds of them, some in packages and some loose, all in nice frames and folders. Immediately we were in business again, this time in the photography game. It was a much cleaner job than painting. We rigged some boxes to look like a camera, using a tomato can for a lens. We were sure our camera would take good pictures for they were ready made! We used the old glass negatives in the camera, of course. Mr. William Thibault was the only photographer I remember. Doris Wright also had a studio in the Briggs Block; I guess this will be the only record of the Butler Photography Studio!

OX BOW KEYS

(Refer to Vol. VII, #2—April, 1965, Middleborough Antiquarian.)

Thanks to the interest of one of our readers, we are now able to identify further and locate the invention and patent of the pin or key at top row right in our illustration on page one of The Middleborough Antiquarian, Vol. VII, No. 2, for last April, 1965. Our correspondent is Newton L. Lockwood, formerly of Plainville, Conn., now living in Minneapolis, Minn. He writes:

> "My Grandfather, William N. Lockwood, invented and patented an ox bow pin. I have the original patent papers, and the brass model. It is the one shown at the extreme right of the top row. Grandpa owned the (former) clock shop at the time, in Hawinton, Conn. This was the clock making firm of Hopkins & Alfred."

SAVE PLYMOUTH ROCK!

We have had a very encouraging letter from Senator Saltonstall concerning the rescue of Plymouth Rock and Cole's Hill from the proposed encroachments of business. It is hoped that the National Park Service may declare this area a National Historic Shrine.

BASKETMAKING IN NEW ENGLAND DURING THE 19th CENTURY

To try to cover this one small facet of human manufacture from 4000 B.C. to 1900 in this short article would be folly. If I can give you a small picture of American basketmaking in the 19th century, and especially in New England, this time and space will not have been wasted. You may find in your local library dozens of books on the subject, and many more chapters in more general volumes that preserve records of local manufacture.

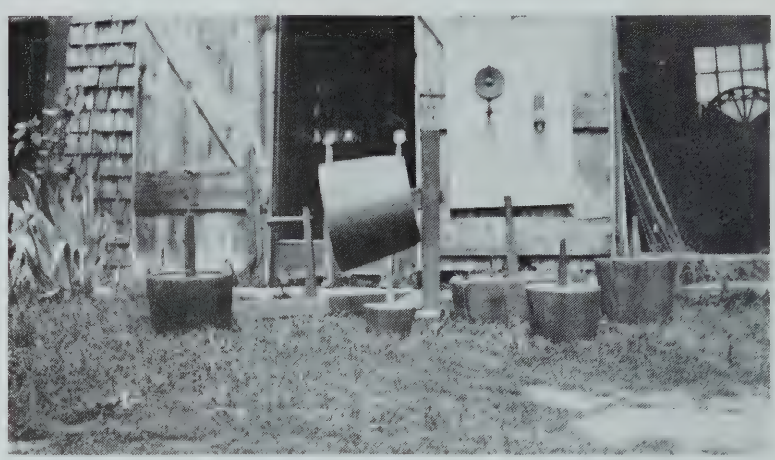
Allen H. Eaton in his "Handicrafts of New England," Harper & Bros., New York 1949, writes: "It (basketry) should have a special interest for every American because the Indians, particularly of North America and that section comprising the United States, have developed the art to a perfection never reached elsewhere." He also states that of the hundreds of baskets in New England museums little is known. The Essex Institute in Salem has some Indian ash splint baskets made probably in the 18th century. In Longfellow's home in Portland, Maine, there are a few splint baskets of Indian make that are known to be over a hundred years old. Old Sturbridge Village has some fine examples, BUT WHAT IS MORE important and interesting is that they also have some of the DRUMS, FORMS OR MOULDS on which the baskets were made — IN FACT, to the best of my small knowledge, they have the ONLY examples of these drums NOT in our collection at our own historical museum right here on Jackson street! I say to the best of my knowledge advisedly, but with the hope that other museums will sharpen their wits and search their collections— AND LET US KNOW if other drums or forms have been preserved.

In Jennie F. Copeland's "Every Day But Sunday — The Romantic Age of New England," (Stephen Daye Press, 1936), chapter seven, I find the best and most complete account of this craft and industry. Unfortunately, this is a local history about Mansfield, Massachusetts, but I shall use it with the belief that is is representative of dozens of New England towns and villages during the last century. Coincidentally, the drums or forms located at Old Sturbridge Village and at the Middleborough Historical Museum were discovered in an old barn in Mansfield in 1937. Unfortunately, the dealer who acquired them jotted down the data about what they were used for, but neglected to take the name of the family, when or how many etc.!

Miss Copeland writes: "The forms on which the baskets were built were called drums and were made of white pine by the basketmakers themselves, or by neighboring carpenters." An industrial survey made in 1845 gives the number of baskets made in Mansfield for that year as 35,200, valued at $5,228.00. By 1865, this number had dropped to 3,040, but the value was $18,385.00. I have hunted high and low for other statistics about this small facet of New England industry, and the only other figures I find are most unsatisfactory.

Abner Bailey is given as one of the first basketmakers in Mansfield, and at the time of his death in 1837, the business of baskets in the town was valued at $4,000.00. His inventory included a saw, a basketmaking machine (I wonder if this could be the large drum that revolved on the oak stand with snowshoe feet in the center of our small illustration?) which he is said to have invented, and fifty-eight unfinished baskets.

Of the many basketmakers in Mansfield during the 19th century, Miss Copeland names a few, and gives short histories of their lives and work. This list includes the Hodgeses, Grovers, Whites, Skinners, Coreys, Fishers, Shepards and Treens. If I had time and space, I would like nothing better than to give you some of this fascinating data, with amusing anecdotes and tales. If you are interested in searching further, I recommend Miss Copeland's work; I am glad to say that our Public Library has a copy available.



By 1857 Mansfield basketmakers were producing 50,000 a year, but oak, due to fuel needed for locomotive and furnaces, became very scarce. Although many baskets were made with ash, oak was more in demand, and these craftsmen were forced to travel to Rehobeth, Middleboro, Easton and Medfield, where there were no basket shops, to get material.

These few notes are intended to be provocative. It is written with the hope that our many contemporary museums will check their collections and let us know if they have any drums, railroad signal baskets (made by Mr. Skinner of Mansfield for different railroad companies), eel pots made of "basket stuff," fan shaped charcoal and coal baskets, Water Cress Baskets, and—well, take your pick of the eighty-six in our broadside! Let's hear from you, and try to straighten out this basket business, which, as one old craftsman said, "it don't make much money, but if you need a few extra dollars, there ain't no easier way to get 'em than to make a few extra baskets."

Addendum. In **Yankee** for August, 1965, you will find a well written story about a Chesterfield, New Hampshire, basketmaker. Mr. Higgins began his basket work in his father's shop at ten years of age, and when he returned from World War 1 he revived the business. One of the illustrations shows Mr. Higgins weaving an ash basket **ON A FORM.**"

LEFT TO RIGHT —

TOP ROW: 7 Berry Baskets, Water Cress Basket, 3 Beecher Baskets, 4 Till Baskets, 2 Verbena Baskets.

SECOND ROW: 2 Wire Bail Baskets, 1 Pony Basket, 1 Peach Basket, 2 examples of covered Peach Baskets, 1 Brace Truck Basket, 1 Diamond Brace Truck Basket, 1 Barrel Basket, 1 Cherry Basket.

THIRD ROW: 2 Grape Baskets, 2 Pony Baskets in Peach Crate, Georgia Peach Carrier, Mott Fruit Carrier, California Fruit Crate, Spanish Onion Crate, Group of Grape Crates.

FOURTH ROW: 2 Gift Berry Crates, 1 Standard Berry Crate, Quart Gift Berry Crate, 1 Peach & Tomato Nesting Crate, Nesting Carrier for Grapes, 2 Baskets in Norfolk Tomato Crate.

FIFTH ROW: Crate of 1,000 Berry Baskets, Bundle of Peach Baskets, Bundle of Stave Baskets, Bundle of Diamond Market Baskets, Extra Heavy Oak Staves, Iron Bound, Swinging Handle, Double Bottom-Picking Baskets, 2 Covers, Banana Crate, Orange Boxes, Slats, Pear and Apple Boxes.

SIXTH ROW: Hickory Show Basket, Bamboo Show Basket, Barrel Display Basket, Ash Counter Basket, Oak Grocer Baskets, Iron Bound Grocers, Oak Delivery Baskets.

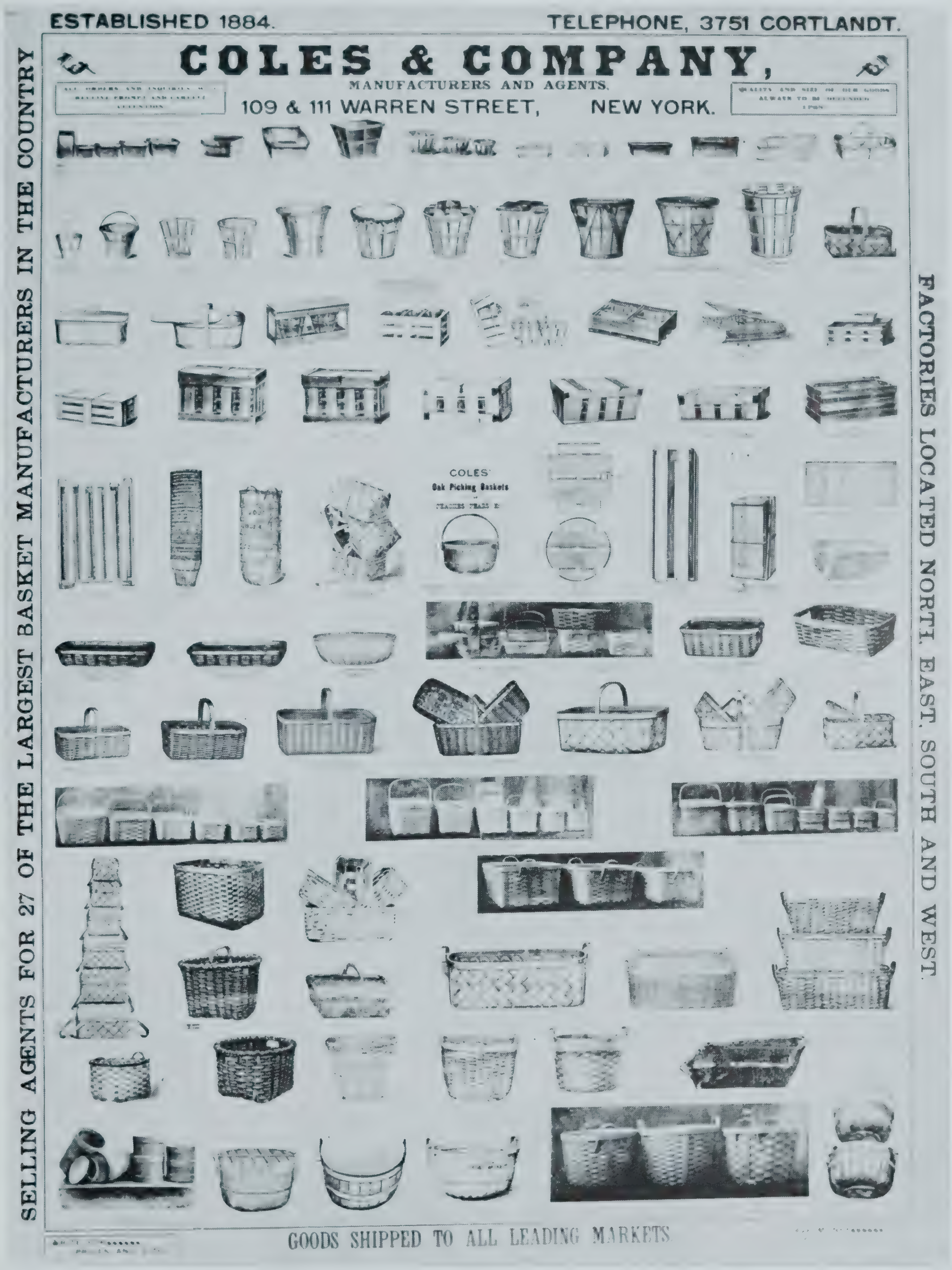
SEVENTH ROW: Splint Market Basket, Splint Laundry Basket, Rattan Laundry, Iron Bound Bamboo-Butchers, Splint Bakers' Baskets, Diamond Market and Covered Diamond Market Baskets.

EIGHTH ROW: Group of 6 Oak Market Baskets, 6 Double Covered Ash Picnic Baskets, 7 Single Covered Ash Picnic.

NINTH ROW: (Illusts. in double row—TOP first)—Laundry Baskets—10 sizes, Hickory Delivery Baskets—4 sizes, Ash Clothes Baskets—3 Sizes. — (LOWER part left to right)—Group of 6 White Ash Satchel Baskets, Over Handle Fish Basket, Split & Whole Rattan Market, Diamond Splint Clothes, Rattan Clothes, Hickory Clothes Baskets—3 sizes.

TENTH ROW: Oyster Basket, Oak Fish Hamper, Bamboo Potato Basket, Iron Bound Bamboo Coal Basket, Nailed Rim Oak Bushel, Split & Whole Show Basket.

BOTTOM ROW: Group of Veneer Apple & Pear Ballets, Stave Basket with Slat Cover, Stave Basket, tight cover, for Candy, Oak Stave, Group of 3 Oak Baskets, 2 Stave Baskets—½ and one Bushel.



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THE WOODEN BOX LOCK

By Lawrence B. Romaine

This story of the wooden lock in America is reprinted through the courtesy of The Magazine Antiques. It appeared in the July 1938 issue, Vol. XXXIV, No. 1.

The crude wooden latch, the hand-forged iron latch, and the more decorative brass latch of colonial days have become the treasured possessions of collectors. Massive oak hinges and delicately wrought iron hinges are sought after by home owner and architect alike. Museums carefully preserve examples of every type of early American hardware, with the available history of each specimen. The blacksmith and the carpenter of olden times would chuckle in their graves if they knew how much attention is being given examples of their work.

In spite of this interest in Early American hardware, I find few persons who are familiar with specimens of the old wood-case box lock. Although several museums have examples with authentic histories, the majority are content with the label **old wooden lock.** Several writers mention the type; but, in so far as I know, only two offer any information on the subject.

Albert H. Sonn in **Early American Wrought Iron** reproduces a drawing of the wood-case lock from the old Spanish Treasury (**1638**) at St. Augustine, Florida. This contrivance is almost identical structurally, with an example in my collection that came from an old farm in Assonet, Massachusetts (**Fig. 1**). I know of several later examples that are still in use on American farms today. If we may assume that the Spanish Treasury lock was the first one of its kind on this side of the Atlantic, we are safe in saying that wood-case locks have seen service in America during the past three hundred years.

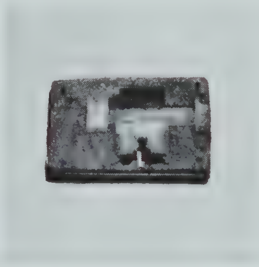

FIG. 1 (left) — LOCK FROM ASSONET, MASSACHUSETTS (c. 1700)

Structurally the same as the lock from the old Spanish Treasury (1638), St. Augustine, Florida. Shown from the open side

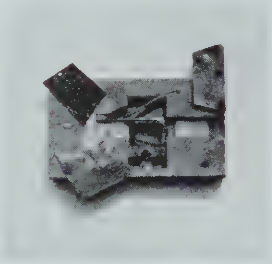

FIG. 2 (right) — LOCK FROM FREDERICK, MARYLAND (c. 1750)

Shown in reverse with the bolt removed. The spring and throw controller are set into slots in the case

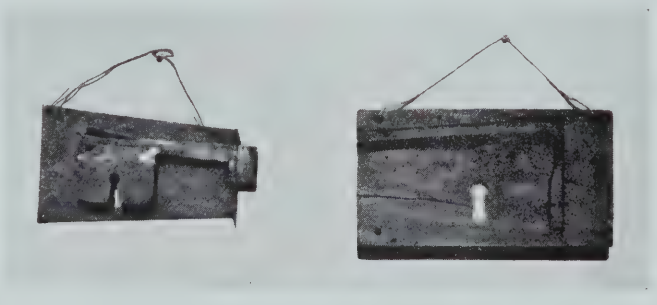

FIG. 3 — LOCK FROM ASSONET, MASSACHUSETTS (c. 1800)

Showing the interior (see Fig. 6j). Later type: at the left is the complete lock unit riveted on an iron plate, ready for insertion in the case. At the right is the hollowed pine case. Stamped in the wood: I. Smith

I am unable to prove that such locks in my collection were all made in this country. Mr. Sonn states that similar devices were common to all our early settlements; but he fails to express an opinion as to whether they were locally produced or were imported. Though I myself have found specimens in eleven different states, I have unearthed no affirmative evidence regarding their original source. By way of negative evidence I can, however, offer a fairly significant fact. Early newspapers of this country carried page after page of hardware advertisements, offering all manner of items just off the latest ship from London. But among the articles named I have never found mention of a wooden lock or a wood-case lock. One of my locks carries a small brass plate bearing the British royal crown and crest and the legend **J. Young, Patentee.** This might indicate that wood-case locks were imported from England; but I lean to the theory that J. Young, having been granted his patent in England, may have come to America and continued to ply his trade with characteristic vigor.

On the other hand, I have been able to determine that three of my locks were made in New England. One is stamped **CHas. HILL.** Hill was a blacksmith in Plymouth County about 1750. Another bears the stamp **North & Stanley,** New Britain. This concern was organized in New Britain, Connecticut, in 1829 and continued to operate until 1850. The third specimen has **Russell, Erwin & Co.** stamped in the wood case. This concern began business in 1836 as Erwin, Lewis & Co. and was acquired by the American Hardware Corporation after 1850. The above citations adequately prove that wood-case locks were made in this country, both by the local blacksmith and, later by the factory. Another specimen, found near Reading, Pennsylvania, is stamped **W. Westwood.** It is a very early lock of the crudest construction. I have not been able to trace Westwood, but believe this lock was made in Pennsylvania. Bearing in mind that the oldest lock of the type in America ascribed to the year 1638, and like-wise recalling the approximate age of farmhouses from which came some of the locks in my collection, I feel safe in stating that wood-case locks were made and used here quite steadily from the seventeenth century until well toward the middle of the nineteenth. During the latter period they were no doubt largely a factory product.

It is still necessary to advance reasons for employing wood cases to house a mechanism inevitably of metal. Perhaps the simplest is that wood was more easily and inexpensively shaped into a box than was metal. When quantity production began, about 1830, the same economic consideration was apparently still in force. Locks with cases of brass or iron were, of course, obtainable; but aside from the relative cost of wood and metal, the latter material called for the exercise of considerable time and skill in its fabrication, whereas any carpenter equipped with mallet and chisel could hack out a passable case from a block of wood.

I am indebted to Charles Arcularius of New York City, whose decorative metalwork is known to many architects, for another suggestion. Mr. Arcularius believes that wood cases were particularly suited to locations subject to dampness. He argues that a wood case would tend to prevent the rapid accumulation of rust and the consequent freezing of the lock to the point of inoperation. By way of substantiating this theory, I may remark that I have found many wood-case locks on spring-house doors.

As I have already indicated, wood-case locks exhibit two quite different methods of construction. In the earliest and crudest procedure, the iron working parts were wedged into slots or cuts in the case. Later, such parts were riveted to an iron plate, and the unit thus assembled was inserted in a compartment chiseled out of the solid wood. The plate was then nailed firmly in place. Early and late lock parts differ little from one another. Each lock has its oak, birch, pine

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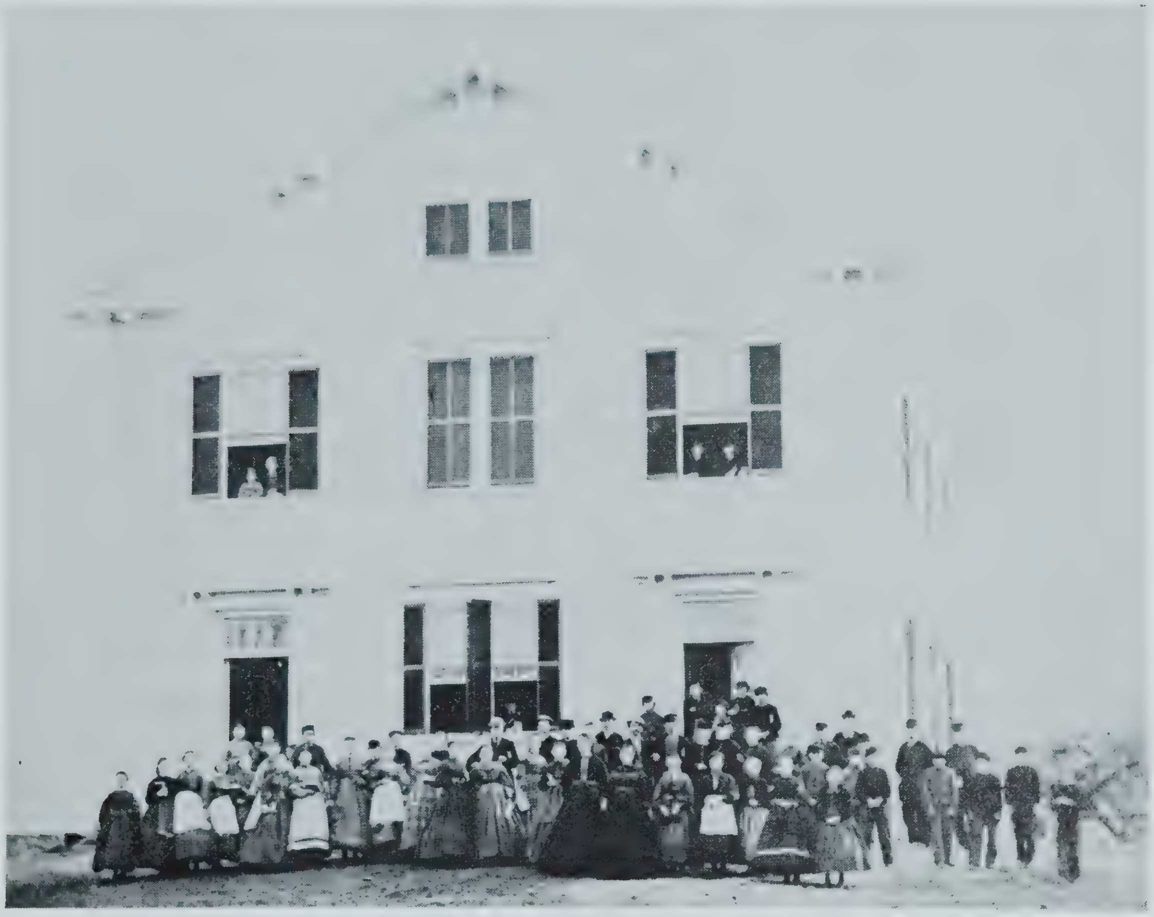

TITICUT ACADEMY 1865
Now Pratt Free School — Presented by Mr. Benj. E. Holmes of North Middleborough. HE is shown in the right upstairs window.

HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF NORTH MIDDLEBORO

by Ethel Richmond Penniman

PART TWO

The Congregational Church building had been occupied since 1747, but more than five years later must still have been unfinished, for in 1756 we find the members attempting to raise money for the job by auctioneering off "pew-spottes." This process was not uncommon in New England, but in this case actual currency was not used. At best in those times it was scarce, and in the region around Taunton and Middleboro "furnace credit" was used as a medium of exchange. It was based on the new iron industry first operated by the Leonards in Taunton and Raynham, and later by Judge Peter Oliver and several Pratts.

At this auction in Titicut Parish it was not a Pratt who got the most important pew. Mr. James Keith purchased No. 1 near the pulpit at the price of one hundred and ten pounds "furnace credit." By modern standards this would seem outrageous, and we must conclude that Mr. Keith was the richest or the most generous man in the parish; or perhaps he was a proud man, for in those days an important "pew-spotte" was what we call a status symbol.

This church stood in a beautiful pine grove, and indeed much of the area around what is now The Green was thickly wooded. The last remnants of it was not felled until after 1800. Inside you may well guess that these pews were uncomfortable enough to assure a wide-awake congregation, and since it was entirely unheated, you would not, had you been among them, have objected in the least to hearing some details about hell fire, or any other warm subject.

In the Autumn of 1756 the Rev. Solomon Reed was called to the pastorate. During his twenty-five years at Titicut he raised and sent through college four sons who all went on to respected public careers. One of them served as a Representative in Congress, and a grandson was elected lieutenant-governor of Massachusetts for many terms. Rev. Solomon Reed married twice, and the story of his second wife is quite amusing. Her name was Sarah Reed, own Cousin to Solomon; such marriages were common in our Colonial Times, but Sarah disapproved of them severely. Like most young girls, she had a "dream man" in mind. She described his attributes in a somewhat negative way; she dictated what he would NEVER be. One—he would never be a widower with children. Two—He would NOT be a minister. Three—he would NOT be a Cousin or relative. Well, wouldn't you guess—he turned out to be Rev. Solomon Reed, her own cousin, with five children! And so she came to Titicut, and a very successful minister's wife, relative, and step-mother she proved to be.

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There seem to be no records of the American Revolution in Titicut. There are records of men from Middleborough and Bridgewater, but none from Titicut. We might guess from the vote in the records for 1777 that the war was having well-known effects on the younger generation. This vote chose Mr. Isaac Perkins "to take care of the young people on Sabbath Days." Mr. Perkins was to see to it that the boys in the gallery behaved themselves.

Records of attempts to pay the minister during this period show signs of growing desperation, and finally it was proposed to get permission of the legislature to hold a lottery. In connection with a church such a proposal sounds horrifying today, but was a fairly common method of raising funds then. However, the lottery was never held, and poor Rev. Reed was soon after beyond the worries of making a living. His journal is preserved by the Pilgrim Society of Plymouth. What it might tell us of life in Titicut as the war came on, was fought and won, and the pieces painfully picked up! BUT Solomon Reed was no Pepys. He was an extremely introspective man, and daily took his own spiritual temperature, reporting in his journal entries like this: — "I was guilty in this morning speaking a word too lightly of Satan and his temptations, and had a heavy charge lying against my soul most all day, but in the evening— was comfortably refreshed with a sense of God's Mercy."

If the war years and the aftermath were hard, they surely served to strengthen the industries of William Pratt and his family. Iron works built below the bridge on Vernon street had been very busy, and one cannon cast there was the largest on record up to that time. By 1800, the beginning of the 19th century which was to see the beginning of the great industrial revolution, we find Titicut ready with its own existing industries. Most of them were owned by one man, or in partnership with some of the Pratt family. This was to be the century of the Pratts in Titicut. Although no industry hums here today, we still see signs of the progress and prosperity that flourished until 1900.

The most noticeable to passing strangers are the handsome homes in a hamlet with no visable means of support! Ah but once upon a time there **were** means of support. One would have thought during the 18th century that the iron industry alone would have provided a most important and prosperous future, but as we have seen during this 20th century, even in the 19th soon became one of larger and larger companies and mergers that killed off the "little fellows" like flies. The Titicut industry was sold out to a larger firm in East Taunton where a water power dam was constructed.

The shoe industry flourished in Titicut in the days when shoes and boots were "put out" to be made in neighborhood farm shops. As power machinery came into use, all the steps in making a pair of shoes were concentrated in one building. Amos Clark was the first to "put out" work to be finished in farm shops in 1838. Many names appear in the records of shoe manufacturers in the area, such as Keith, Kingman, Perkins, Hammond, Holmes, Stetson, Alden and Leonard. Nahum Keith invented a jack for holding the leather during manufacture; he also introduced iron plows to the area. There was a prejudice against iron ploughs, so Mr. Keith with a touch of 20th century salesmanship, loaned them to farmers free of charge. The demand was fast in coming from one farmer! He freely borrowed **three** in rapid succession, breaking them furiously on the rocks of North Middleboro!

Several of the houses well up from the Green on Pleasant street were Hathaway homes. Dr. Joseph Hathaway was in partnership for a time with Cephas Thompson, the famous portrait painter. Dr. Hathaway was a gifted chemist, and discovered a method of refining petroleum for use as a burning fluid for lamps.

The manufacturing talents of the Pratts carried some of them far afield. Jared Pratt engaged in the iron business in the Tremont district of Wareham, and there, with his Uncle Isaac Pratt, manufactured the first machine cut nails in the Country. Later he built large furnaces, foundries and machine shops near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. (The broadside of the sale of his property may be seen in our Museum in the blacksmithshop — Printed in 1854, this broadside gives us a very clear picture of how extensive these "Fairview Iron Works" were. There were Puddling and Heating Furnaces, Two Rolling Mills, Two Tack Factories — 38 Nail Machines, Cooper's Mill, Blacksmith shops — and The Mansion House.) Mr. Pratt sold out and returned to his native village to enjoy the last years of his life.

THE MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleborough, Mass.
VOLUME VIII 1966 Number 3

Lawrence B. Romaine	Editor
Mertie E. Witbeck	Associate Editor
Miss Martha J. Howard	Proof Reader

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Adults	.50
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Titicut Academy, best remembered as Pratt Free School, was built by Enoch Pratt, who left home and prospered in the hardware trade in New Jersey and Maryland. He was a friend of Andrew Carnegie, and became one of the great philanthropists of his day; but in spite of his many bequests such as the Baltimore Public Library, and other institutions, he never forgot Titicut as many great men are prone to do. It was Enoch Pratt's intention to begin free secondary education for the youth of Titicut Parish. It corresponded to our present day high schools, but did not include Latin and foreign languages according to Mr. Pratt's stipulation. At that time college was mainly for clergymen and lawyers, and Latin and the languages were necessary for admission; perhaps Mr. Pratt preferred young Titicut educated for other broader careers. However, endowment values change with the times, and today the school serves only the third and fourth grades. There was a time when it was considered a great honor to have graduated from Titicut Academy or Pratt Free School. Reunions of classes were often held in considerable elegance and with eloquence. There is a photograph showing more than two hundred at a reunion even in this 20th century. There is also still preserved a calendar of events for that celebration and a menu from lobster to ice cream that makes your mouth water. At that time the trustees were Augustus Pratt, David G. Pratt and Herbert Pratt. There are people alive today who attended that reunion, and presumably survived the menu!

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The last active industry in North Middleboro was the firm of Keith & Pratt, that manufactured shoes into the nineteen twenties. Eventually the building which stood on Pleasant street at a little curve near the site of the Old Indian Church was bought by outsiders. Part of the machinery had been moved out, and probably no one was too surprised when on a cold Winter noon the building was discovered on fire. There was no town water, and all the fire department could do was to protect the houses of the Carver family across the street. Thus perished the last Titicut industry.

With the last visable support gone, North Middleboro no longer had enough mail coming and going to convince Uncle Sam that it needed a post office. Although going to the post office had really been less convenient than having a mail carrier stuff your letters into a box in front of the house, the change to being known as an R.F.D. seemed to many of the community a step toward oblivion. The worst was yet to come. Before a quarter of a century had passed, the name Titicut would no longer decorate the railroad station. Designers of time-tables said people got it mixed up with Teaticket on the Cape. By this time the railroad was declining anyway, and shortly no trains stopped — and in still a shorter time, no trains **ran** at all! Today it is almost impossible to find even the foundation of Titicut Station.

Once upon a time North Middleboro, or Titicut, was perhaps the handsomest part of the town, it's streets arched with elms and other huge trees, the well cared-for look of every house, the elm-edged Green, the fine stone walls and thriving farms. Fine homes remain to remind us of the glory of former days of prosperity. Although the ancient elms have nearly all gone, the green is edged with young oaks set out by the town. A sign put up by the Ladies' Community Club proclaims that **this** is Titicut Parish. The future? Although the years to come for Southeastern Massachusetts are unpredictable, we can still look with pride on the rich river valley soil noted by Winslow and Hopkins of the Pilgrim Fathers, and beloved by generations of American Indians, enjoy The Green and our old homesteads, and remember our heritage.

MR. WHITE'S BASKET SHOP

By Susan B. Brackett

Among the small industries that through the years were carried on at Rock was that of Mr. R. Henry White, who for many years made good sturdy baskets for various purposes. To the writer's knowledge he made round bushel, and half bushel and a good sturdy "market" basket, so called, which also held a bushel. Besides being used on the farms for harvesting vegetables and fruits they were used to convey firewood from woodpile to the traditional "wood-box."

Mr. White's shop, a building 20′ by 30′, was situated on the westerly side of "Deacon Bill's Pond," now known to present residents, or called by them, "Rock Pond." It was situated at the rear of his home and a short distance in rear of a garage, all owned at the present time by Mrs. Lucy Westgate.

Through the kindness of Mr. Mason Shaw I am enabled to give a fairly detailed account of how these baskets were made. As a boy Mr. Shaw used to help Saturdays or at any other spare time that Mr. White might need him. Other boys helped sometimes when Mason was not available and at times Mrs. White helped by running the flywheel. This industry flourished for a period of 30 years, possibly longer than that.

Good clean white oak logs were required, these being from four to five feet in length, and were purchased from various people who delivered them to the premises. There could be no knots and the butt of the tree only was used as there could be no limbs removed. These logs would average from 5″ to 10″ in diameter. These were rolled into the pond where they remained from a period of weeks to two or three months. This was done to loosen the bark and to be thoroughly soaked to be worked more easily.

They were then removed from the water and each log split into four sections. This was done by use of wedges and axes and a wooden mallet. The mallet was ringed so it would not split. This was at least five inches across and eight inches in length and had a handle three feet long.

Incidentally, Mr. White used the mallet to catch muskrats with which the pond abounded. He would set a trap at the outside of the animal's hole, then hammer the top of the bank with the mallet causing the rat to emerge to find the trap waiting for it.

When the four sections of the log were separated they were carried into the shop and placed on a bench. This was well braced to work properly. There was a big flywheel with a handle. This had pulley and shaft and the flywheel had a leather belt. One end of the belt was attached to the pulley. The other end was attached to a drawing-knife. Mr. White used this to strip the wood. He did this himself—and did nothing else at the time. The person turning the crank furnished the power. Mr. White used his eye for the width he wanted. No mechanical device was used for this.

After a sufficient number of strips were obtained in the above manner for this purpose they were given a good steam bath. This was done as follows: In those years a stove was manufactured for just such purposes. A fire was built under a huge bowl-shaped container which was a part of the stove (built into it). This container was filled with water and heated by the fire beneath furnished the steam. A huge box was placed over this steam, and the strips which Mr. White had ready, were placed in this box and the whole covered with canvas. The strips, when sufficiently steamed would become pliable and were then ready for weaving into baskets.

The product was marketed and delivered by Mr. White himself, we know in New Bedford and probably to other points in this area.

A special conveyance was used, known as a "rack" wagon. It was approximately ten or twelve feet long. The body was about three feet wide. Slats, from three to four inches in width and six or seven feet in length, were placed at intervals, slanting outward making this wagon eight feet wide at the top. To these uprights slats were attached horizontal ones around the wagon.

Mr. White owned no horse but could always obtain one from the Livery Stable. This business was carried on by the Gibbs family and later Mr. John E. Benson who was Mr. White's son-in-law. The huge barn where this latter business was conducted for many years is still standing but we believe is to be razed in the near future.

These "rack" wagons were, as previously stated, used by farmers for their purposes and this particular one was used for a more festive occasion. We used to have "Horribles" at Rock and much thought and ingenuity went into their preparation. Some seventy-five years ago one Fourth of July there was a "bear" in the parade. The bear's name was Mr. Daniel Johnson, who for several years was a foreman on the R. R. He lived up-stairs in the building now known as the "Faietti Apartments" on corner of Miller and Smith Streets. As should be on this holiday it was hot and muggy. Mr. Johnson wore a black Buffalo coat, was in the straw at the bottom of the wagon and doing everything to be a proper "bear." This "get-up" was horse-drawn and Mr. Rueben Gibbs was the driver while Mr. Mason Shaw, whom I have mentioned previously, was the "monkey" on the horse's back to assist. This entry certainly was by common consent considered the best in the parade and I do not believe anyone who saw it ever forgot those particular "Horribles."

The house on Smith Street where Mr. White lived for many years is still standing. The shop burned down several years ago, and as already mentioned, a garage was erected a bit in front of where the shop stood.

No one living at present knows how Mr. White came to be a resident of Rock.

He always called his wife "Sarah," although her name was "Angeline."

In Hope Rest Cemetery, here at Rock, a monument bears the following inscription:

Rufus H. White	June 18, 1833	Died March 18, 1912
Angeline M.	August 11, 1838	Died August 31, 1896

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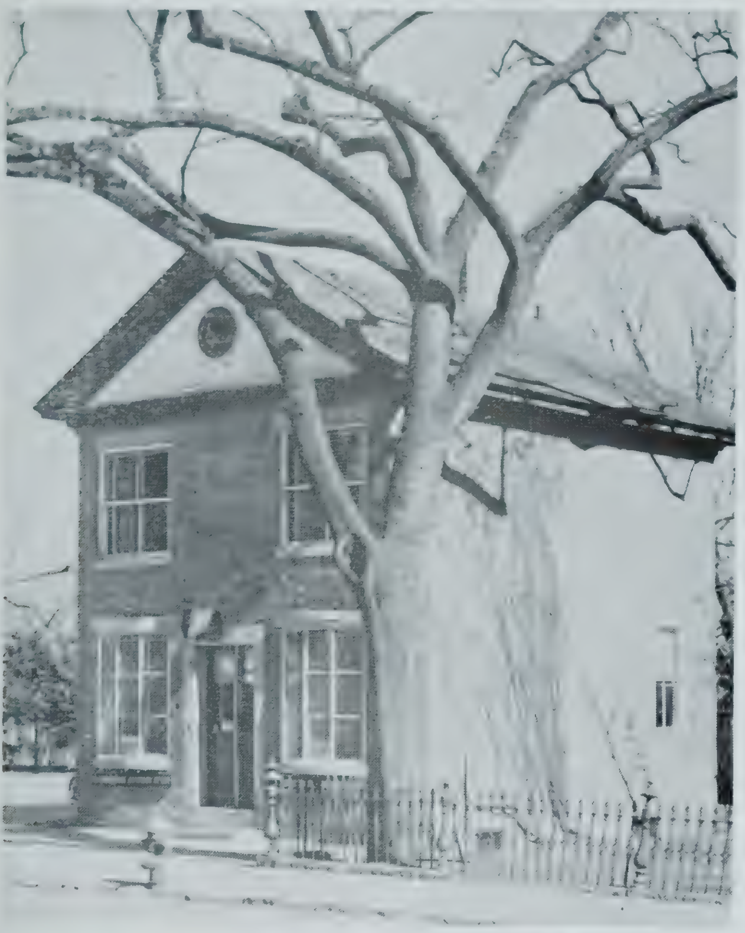


EVERETT ROBINSON'S LAW OFFICE

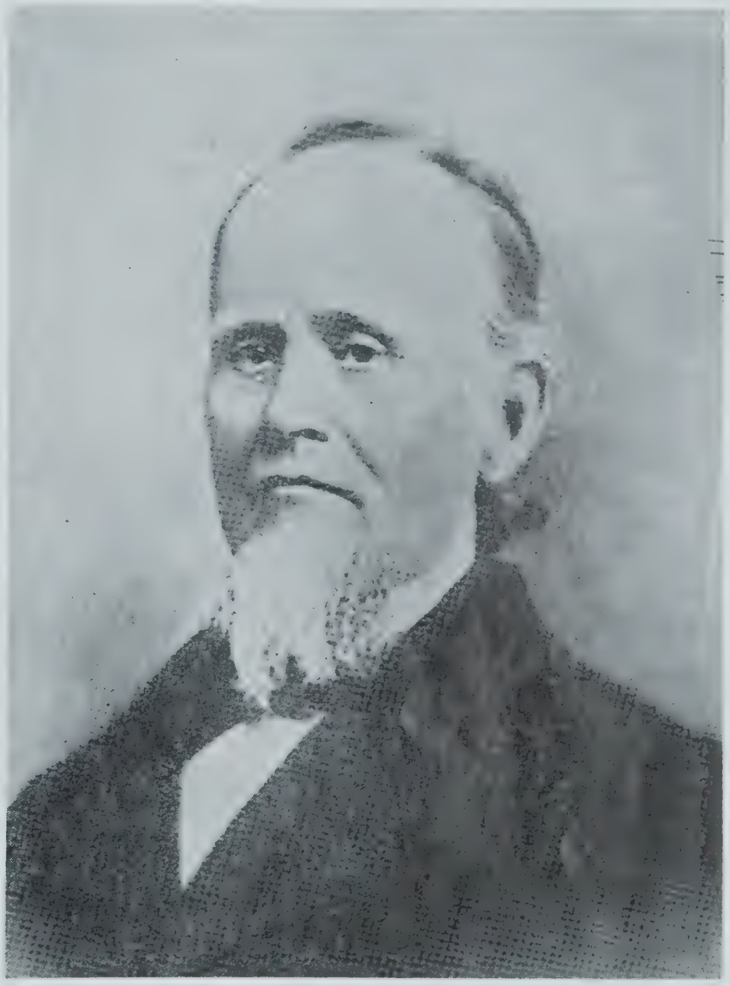
MRS. EVERETT ROBINSON

ANOTHER LANDMARK GONE

The Robinson House — North Main Street

With news that the Robinson house is soon to be torn down, come thoughts of the Robinson family and the prominent place they held in the life of our town.

The house itself, according to an article written by E. T. P. Jenks, was built by Major Ethan Earle who was proprietor of a dry goods store in the old building on the corner of North Main and Centre streets where now stands the Peirce block. Major Earle married one of the daughters of Major Levi Peirce. The Jenks homestead, which later became the Martinique and has since gone the way of too many of Middleboro's historic buildings, was built in 1828 and it is safe to assume that Major Earle built his house in about the same period.



EVERETT ROBINSON — January 22, 1816 — August 5th, 1897.

The ornamental iron fence across the front of the property which added so much distinction in former years was erected by Lawyer Everett Robinson who purchased the house from Major Earle. The fence was put up in 1860 and Mr. Robinson may have purchased the house shortly before this date. One of his daughters, Florence A. Robinson, not long before her death in 1956 came across the bill for the fence, dated June 20, 1860, for the amount of $164.38, at $1.62 per foot plus four extra posts at 1.00 each. The fence can be seen in the accompanying photograph of the interesting brick building adjacent to the Robinson property, long known as "Lawyer Robinson's law office." This building is said to be well over 150 years old. It was purchased by Mr. Robinson in 1878 for use as his law office. He occupied the building until his death in 1897. Before the building was purchased and occupied by Lawyer Robinson, it was used in the early 1800's as a jewelry and watchmaker's shop conducted by Reland Tinkham. He was joined in 1847 by Foster Tinkham who took over the business when Reland retired. Foster Tinkham was father of Edward F. Tinkham who for many years was proprietor of a jewelry store on Centre

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street, having learned the trade of his father in the old brick building on North Main street.

After Lawyer Robinson's death, the building was occupied successively by Monroe and Osborne, realtors, Studley and Drew, antique dealers and Attorney Percy Churbuck who purchased the building in 1949, retaining ownership for twelve years. In later years it has served as an office for optometrists, first Dr. Leo Gibbons and second Dr. Joseph Comalli.

Everett Robinson was one of the prominent lawyers and civic leaders of his day. He was born in Middleboro in 1816 and attended Peirce Academy. He taught school in North Middleboro, studying law in his leisure hours, later studying under Zachariah Eddy and admitted to the Plymouth County bar in 1846. He served as Middleboro's town clerk, treasurer, selectman and a member of the school committee, and was elected a member of the state legislature in 1850 and to the senate in 1866. He was the first president of the Middleborough Savings Bank. Mr. Robinson died August 5, 1897 at the age of 81 years.

Mr. Robinson's family was an interesting one. His wife was Sarah W. Taylor of Dartmouth. There were four daughters, Elizabeth, Sarah, Kate and Florence. The two oldest, Elizabeth and Sarah, were women of unusual education and talent. Elizabeth attended Moses Brown School in Providence and later went to the Boston Normal Art School. After her father's death, she carried on his extensive insurance business. In 1916 she fell and fractured a limb which resulted in her death from a blood clot. Sarah attended Peirce Academy and Wellesley College. She taught in private schools in New Jersey, Delaware and New York. Well versed in foreign languages, she made many trips abroad. Miss Robinson died of accidental gas asphyxiation in 1915.

Kate was afflicted all her life with a mental illness. Florence, the youngest daughter, was for many years a librarian in the Middleborough Public Library, being employed there when the library was in a corner room of the Town Hall and continuing in the new library building as children's librarian. She was the victim of an automobile accident which resulted in a crippling illness and her death in 1956.

MEW

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

With this issue of the Antiquarian we are beginning a brief series of biographical sketches of some of the men and women who played an important part in the early development of our town. We hope readers will find it interesting to become better acquainted with some of those who laid the foundation. . . . . .

REV. GEORGE H. WASHBURN, DD., LLD.

Dr. George H. Washburn was one of Middleborough's most illustrious sons. He was born in Middleborough on March 1, 1833, the son of Philander and Elizabeth (Holmes) Washburn. His grandfather, General Abiel Washburn, was one of the leading business men of Middleborough at a time when the business center of the town was located at Muttock. General Abiel owned the general store there in the early 1800's, which was afterwards carried on by his son, Philander.

Dr. Washburn prepared for college at Phillips Andover Academy and was graduated from Amherst College in 1855. For three years he attended Andover Theological Seminary, leaving to go to Constantinople in Turkey as treasurer of the American Board of Foreign Missions. In 1862, he returned to finish his course at Andover and the next year was ordained in the Congregational ministry. He again went to Turkey where he continued with the American Board until 1869, when he became vice-president of Robert College in Constantinople, becoming president four years later, an office he retained until 1904. In that year, because of advancing years, he tendered his resignation. Following his return to this country, he became widely known as a lecturer, being considered an authority on Far Eastern affairs.

Dr. Washburn married in Constantinople, Henrietta L. Hamlin, daughter of Rev. Cyrus Hamlin, DD., of Maine. He joined the Central Congregational church of Middleboro in 1850 and retained his membership until his death. On May 1, 1910, a special service was held in the Central Congregational church to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the reception into the church of Dr. Washburn and George Henry Shaw. Dr. Washburn died at his residence in Boston on February 14, 1915, at the age of eighty-one years. He was survived by his widow and a son, Dr. George H. Washburn.

STEPPING STONES AT WARRENTOWN

By Lyman Butler

In all probability there are very few people today who remember when an old house stood on the north side of Plymouth Street just a short distance toward Purchade from the birth place of Lavinia Bump (Later Mrs. Tom Thumb) at the time the Warren family lived in the big house on the corner of Plymouth Street. Of course now there are a couple of dwellings between the Bump house and the site of this house.

On the 1855 map the house was listed as Mrs. Caswell. What clan of Caswells it was I have not been able to find out. The site was approximately five hundred feet from the river bridge and set back a bit from the road.

In the late eighteen hundreds an Indian family named Reading lived here. The house had burned years before I was in existence and now the only thing that marks the location is a Buttonwood tree which stood in the yard.

At the time Plymouth Street was widened and black topped the grader cut into the bank and dug out a couple of the big flat stones which had evidently been part of a stepping stone walk to the front of the house. Adelbert "Bert" Jacques having a little house next door salvaged these two stones, and checked and found that there were more. He took them home and has used them for stepping stones to his own house.

Recently he asked me if the Museum would be interested in having them. I told him I was pretty sure they would so at the first opportunity I will go down and get these stones and lay them in the lawn in front of the old mill stone at the old store entrance to the second building. Thus we will have old stones which probably date back to a much earlier date than the Museum houses themselves.

At the turn of the Century the only houses on that side of the road between Summer Street and Purchade school was the Warren house, (now cut in two and one half of it moved a couple hundred feet West), the Bump house (Mrs. Tom Thumb's birthplace), Jim Cushmans at the river and the J. Bump house a few hundred feet up toward Purchade where I was born.

MUSEUM NEWS

A telephone call from Oregon, following a letter from Sutro's Museum about their Tom Thumb Collections, made me trot down to Jackson street. Of course I had to turn down the offer, but the description of a rifle presented to General Tom Thumb by Mr. I. Brown in Cincinnati in 1862 did sort of make me drool a bit, even at appraisals ranging from $1,000.00 to $1,200.00 way, way out in Oregon!

However, when I had walked through our own Tom and Lavinia rooms at the museum, and really re-appraised one of the finest collections of memorabilia, and many, many of the famous couple's own personal belongings we have preserved for future generations, I felt better. What is one rifle to their original manuscript account books in the P. T. Barnum Circus days? What is one rifle to the little organ Clyde Gurney gave us? What is one rifle to the myriad of things we have on display? Why, on second thought, I wouldn't swap our exhibit at the Mayflower School for TWO rifles. Do I whet your appetite to think better of Middleborough's Tom Thumb and his little Wife Lavinia? Don't you want to drop in and SEE what we have collected through the years? Why not?

JUNE 10th through the 19th, 1966.

Don't miss the Exhibition of original lithographs by N. Currier, and Currier & Ives at the Museum one to five p.m.—courtesy of the Travelers Insurance Companies, and Clyde S. Thomas, Inc.

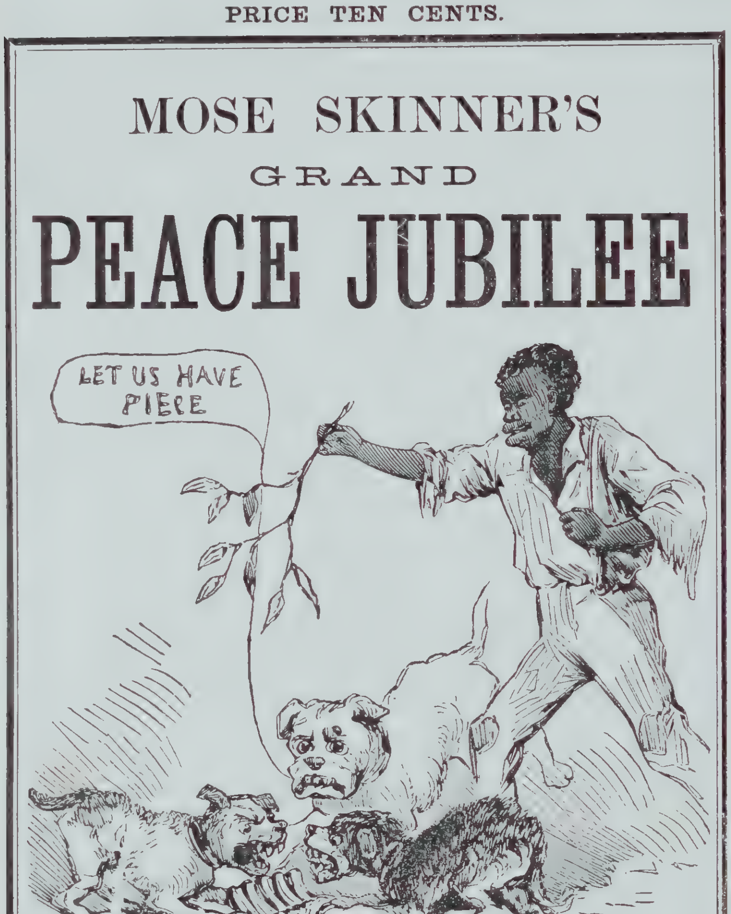
We have a communication from Edwin A. Battison, Curator of Light Machinery, Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. that we hope will inspire some of our local antiquarians to do a little research.

Mr. Battison writes that he is very anxious to discover further information about THOMAS BLANCHARD (one time resident of Middleboro), and SAMUEL ROGERS. He has sent us the following clue from "New England Manufacturers & Manufactories:"

"—— most valuable of all (patents for cutting and heading nails and tacks) (was) the brand and tack machine of Thomas Blanchard of Middleboro, Mass., invented when he was eighteen, and remodelled and perfected through six years."

Has anyone any information about these pioneers in Yankee machinery?

LBR.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CURIOUS AND INTERESTING EXCERPTS

from a Diary Kept by Mrs. James H. Harlow from 1870 to 1874, including Amusing Adventures and Travels with Mr. and Mrs. James E. Peirce.

The diary was presented to our Museum for our archives by Albert Alden

"Thursday March 15th 1871 Henry, Maria and myself left home at 5 oclk. P.M. for New York by way of Long Island Sound. It was very rough going round Point Judith and very foggy all night and next day I was very much frightened all the time. We anchored twice and was run into by a Brig, a piece taken out of the wheelhouse. On Friday at 2 oclock I went on deck and was there alone. It was so foggy I could not see the ship's length. I ventured to ask the Pilots when they thought we might move on — they answered with that tone of voice which implied more than words, "I do not know, Madame. Then I prayed as never before — Lord lift this fog and carry us safely into land — I prayed as much as ten minutes till I thought I could seem to see the fog lift, and indeed it did. I heard the order given to "man the captstain," — and in one hour we were safely landed in New York. Lord, pray for my want of faith.

We went to Brooklynn and took board with Mrs. Reek, 23 Middagh street. Henry came home on Monday. Maria staid nearly 4 weeks and had a delightful time. I met with the sewing circle at Plymouth Church twice, and am a member of the Bechus sewing circle. Capt. and Mrs. Gibbs were extremely kind to us all the time. James came on to come home with us. We came home by R.R. April 11th, 1871."

"July 15th Mrs. C. E. Hall, Henry and myself left home for Bristol Ferr, R.I. on Wednesday. Mrs. Robinson, Mr. and Mrs. Hall to Lawton Valley, one of the most lovely spots I ever visited. — A clam bake from Providence numbering 18 hundred was the principal feature of the day.

"Sat. July 23rd Mrs. Hall left for Middleboro in the cars. Henry came at evening. We went to Quaker Meeting Sunday.

"Monday 25th Henry gone home in cars. I came here (?) alone with the guests at night with horse and carriage.

"Thursday 28th my own dear Maria came—I was so glad to behold her I did not know how to behave.

"Friday Aug. 4th Maria, James and myself drove to Newport visited Redwood Library drove around Botesman's Point, did the City and drove to Bristol Ferry in a pouring rain.

"March 1st, 1872 — Friday p.m. Henry, myself, James, Maria, Mr. & Mrs. Andrews left in cars for Taunton by invitation to attend Judge and Mrs. Fox Party — about 150 were present — had a pleasant time — spent the night there and came home in cars Sat. a.m.

"March 26th Tuesday p.m. left home in special train of cars for North Bridgewater in company with Henry, James & Maria, Mrs. Soule, Rose, Mr. Drake & Sister — arrived safely about 8 oclk. and heard Henry Ward Beecher deliver his lecture "Redemption of the Ballot." It was very fine indeed. Arrived home about 11 oclk.

"Friday July 12th Judge and Mrs. Fox and family came to visit Maria. Maria gave her barn party — about 100 present — very pleasant party — heat is intense.

"Jan. 16th 1873. My darling little Dog Frisk fell from the elevator in the shovel shop and was killed. OH that this should be the first thing I must write in this book for 1873. 17th. We buride him. I tied his little green ribbon around his neck for the last time, and now I am indeed alone. Oh, My Heavenly Father, comfort me, comfort me.

"June 29th James, Maria, Mrs. Gibbs, Henry & myself went to the Peace Jubilee (in Boston) — heard Madame Laughton sing and all the bands play — the Prussians was the best. (sic).

"July 26th Mr. Harlow and myself left for Falmouth Heights. Found a nice room at the Tower House. Sunday 27th went to Church at the Hall, Henry slept most of the time. Wednesday 30th Ed left for Marthas Vineyard, so Maria and I are alone with 100 around us — played croquet. Friday orders came to change rooms while I was in the bath — "poor Maria performed wonders in a short space of time, and now I am in the very 'uppermost room."

"August Monday 12th James & Maria and myself left home for Old Orchard Beach — staid for two weeks — left Old Orchard House for St. John 26th, stopped at Bangor Monday night, left Tuesday in sleeping car for New Brunswick — Left for home Friday, arrived at Portland two oclk. a.m. and slep a few hours at Preble House, and took cars for home.

"Monday September 8th 1873 commenced repairing our house Mr. Tripp of Fairhaven took the job — we live between our kitchen and my dear Maria's — Thursday Jan. 15th the carpenters left and I am worn out they have abused our confidence and lingered as long as they could — may the Lord reward them. Sat. January 18th 1874 the painters came — Feb. 25th — I am worn out completely — have not been able to write for six months — could not even find pen, ink or paper.

"Friday May 1 — All went to Town Hall to hear the Hampton Students — it is truly wonderful what God hath wrought for them — James gone to Boston to hear the eulogy on Senator Sumner at the Music Hall.

"August 28th Henry and I go to Marthas Vineyard — President Grant visits — a grand oration — splendid time. Home — James, Maria and I leave for Saratoga — sail across Lake Champlain and Lake George — splendid week's visit. Visit(ed) the Hoosac Tunnel and rode on the Hoosac Mountain — hot and dirty."

(There were of course many shopping trips to Boston, Bazaars, weddings at home in Middleboro, social activities, and of course the inevitable house cleanings and daily chores, puzzles and troubles. I hope these few excerpts will prove interesting and give us all a picture of life in our community nearly a hundred years ago.)

> **Mr. and Mrs. Harlow and their daughter Maria Louisa Harlow (Mrs. James E. Peirce) lived in their house on South Main st., built by Mr. Harlow and afterwards occupied by Mr. Jesse Morse. Their daughter, Mrs. Peirce, left the money which made St. Lukes Hospital possible.

FALL BROOK FURNACE

By Lyman Butler

Until about four years ago I was unaware that there was anything left of the Old Furnace at Fall Brook. My wife Helen (Boardman) Butler having lived in that section of town nearly all her life told of going there fishing and many a walk ended at the top of the Old Furnace as a youngster. One day we took a trip to the site which is at the Fall Brook Stream on the right hand side of East Grove Street when going towards the Cape. I was amazed that so much of the original furnace is left standing. I took a few snapshots of the furnace and also the walls of the sluice way which are in remarkable shape considering they have been there well over two hundred years. This sluiceway carried the water from the reservoir to a water wheel at the furnace. This wheel worked the bellows which made the forced draft in the furnace. All these old furnaces had to be near water as this was the only power of the time.

The furnace is in nearly the same condition as when the picture which is in the town History was taken over sixty years ago.

Wanting to get a few color slides of the area before there was too much foliage, late in March the Mrs. and I went down and browsed around a bit trying to determine where the different parts of the operation might have been, a few days later my friend John Wright and myself with our wives went down again. This time we took digging implements and after trying to picture where the casting might have been done we dug here and there and unearthed a few pieces of iron which were well underground. We dug into the slag piles which are plentiful and got some good specimens of the colorful waste from the melted iron ore. There is quite a bit of lime stone lying around, real big chunks of it. Down near the end of the excavation there are a couple of big pine trees lying where they were blown down evidently in the hurricane of '38. Where the roots were and also clinging to the roots is a vein of good iron ore of which I took a generous sample.

We separated on the side hill hoping to find the remains of a dump which might have been used at the time the furnace was working but had no luck although we did find a dump which was probably used in the late eighteen or early nineteen hundreds. Got a few bottles from it but nearly everything was broken.

I took a sample of the ore to the Spring Historical meeting and showed it to Mr. Rodney Briggs who that night gave a very interesting talk on "The Iron Story." He identified it as bog ore. He had a couple of pictures of the furnace and told of the time it was in operation. The bed of the stream is yellow with iron color and no doubt there is still plenty of ore left in the hills around the brook. The Mrs. says that before East Grove Street was hard surfaced, every time it rained the water in the gutters was yellow with iron.

Mr. Briggs says that much of the ore which was used here was brought in by boat from Lake Assawompsett, down the Nemasket river and up the Fall Brook Stream. I hope that the Committee which is supposed to look into and acquire historical spots will consider this area as it is probably the oldest furnace in this section having started around 1735 about the same time as the works at Muttock, and though there was only a furnace on this spot there was much hollow ware made.

I will make up a little display of samples of the limestone, slag, ore and fragments of iron which we dug here, and maybe the Curator will find a spot somewhere in the Museum for it. Although this place was not as large or as much publicized as the Oliver Works, I think it worth saving as a historical site.

GIFTS AND ACQUISITIONS

Mrs. John Bass has presented the museum with a petticoat elaborately hand embroidered by her grandmother at 14 years of age! She announced she was going to have the handsomest wedding gown anyone ever had, and began with the petticoat. The wedding gown proved to be a beautiful blue silk dress with the skirt draped in a fashion that would display the petticoat. Also a candlestick spread and a fine old foot warmer.

As reported in the last issue, I'M WRONG. Marion Channing writes that she never said the small child's wheelbarrow belonged to her grandfather. I don't know where I got the idea. The main thing is we HAVE the wheelbarrow.

Mrs. Arthur Pratt of Bridgewater contributed a deed to pew #72 in the First Church at the Green to Charles Coffin in 1889.

We are indebted to Albert Alden of Palmer, Mass. for a diary kept by Mrs. James E. Harlow (Mother of Maria Louisa Harlow Peirce) from 1871 to 1874. You may read some of the more interesting excerpts in this issue.

From Miss Miriam A. Bassett and her Sister, Mrs. Inez Alder a fine little child's sled, hand made and painted a delightful old red.

Mrs. Edgar Sowerby has given us a picture of Captain Jack Barnett, a member of General Tom Thumb's Troupe.

Ernest E. Thomas presented the museum with a lap-board, the kind used by our mothers and grandmothers when dressmaking, a small iron toy horse & cart, and chopping-knife.

We are grateful to Mrs. Gladys Jones for a collection as follows:—a blue china bowl, several glass salt cellars, a hand woven blanket and several 19th century books — one is "The Fortune Teller and Dream Book," the others miniature books of the last century:—"Book of Trades — Tom Thumb Library," a Sunday school hymnal, and "The Birds of Spring," dated 1859. Last but not least, a picture of and letter written by Col. A. W. Smith, a Civil War veteran who enlisted at seventeen in a Massachusetts regiment in the Army of the Cumberland. He fought in every engagement until captured at the battle of Chicamaugua and was sent to Andersonville Prison. Col. Smith appeared in Middleboro later with Chautauqua.

Through the courtesy of Dr. & Mrs. James M. Bonnar a collection of monogrammed coin silver spoons that belonged to Mrs. Ethan Peirce of Lakeville. The Bonnars also presented the museum with two hand painted pictures on frosted glass dated 1886 formerly owned by Mrs. Charles J. Howe of Middleboro.

Gifts from Mrs. O. J. Lyman, Bridgewater, relating to the Thompson family who lived on Thompson street:

A picture of the Thompson homestead on Thompson street, a wash drawing by B. A. Thompson. The homestead was built in 1788 and burned some years ago.

A view of Middleboro in the 19th century, taken from a point near Clifford street and looking over the center of the town. A fine lithograph, in the small folio, by Bufford.

A group picture of the Thompson family, including Austin Thompson, Angie Thompson Cornish, Annie Thompson, who married a Thompson, Charles Thompson, Emma Thompson, Nellie Thompson Grey, Philander Thompson, father of Mrs. Bessie Thompson Cram, now living in Portsmouth, Rhode Island.

Also a photograph of Mrs. Everett Robinson, wife of the well-known Middleboro lawyer whose interesting law office still stands on the corner of Jackson and North Main streets, and who was mother of Elizabeth, Sarah, Kate and Florence Robinson.

Mrs. Ernest Pratt, April 5, 1966 — 3 fine old wood butter moulds: acorn, sheaf of wheat, "T" Oak egg basket-oak handle. Lumberman's measure, Draftsman's T square, Two black silk waists, a silk shirt and fringed shawl — ca, 1880-1890. Collection of 19th century penknives, Block tin leaf cookie mould, Unusual block tin ice cream mould (or jelly?), Lignum vitae block for sharpening knives — 3 small tools — which I hope to figure out.

Miss Louise B. Pratt — Collection of old laces.

Mrs. Julia Long of Plymouth st., thanks to Bud Martinson, April 22, 1966. A small individual pudding or sauce bowl, Rockingham ware, probably made about 1870. A small Ironstone Ware spittoon — not the usual floor type, but only 3¾" in diameter, and 3" high, with handle and decorated spout to dump! Perhaps for an individual invalid who still liked to chew tobacco? A pair of lady's stockings knitted by hand with extremely fine steel needles in a beautiful lace design.

Helen Wood Ashley, 2 brochures: "TWO OLD FOLKS' CONCERTS AND SUPPER in Town Hall — For Benefit of Middleboro Band — Bro. Chananiah, Conductor." Oct 29th and 31st, 1890, one illust. adv. illust. SPARROW BROS. ONE-PRICE CLOTHIERS MIDDLEBORO — ALSO Jones Brothers, Main st., Antique and Modern Wall Papers, Drape etc.

Mrs. Harrison H. Huster, CRANFORD, N. J. — "Domestic Fashions," from Sylvester's Bazaar, 5 Center st., Middleboro, Illusts, boys girls ladies & men for 1875.

Mr. Roger D. Harris, formerly of Middleboro now of North Adams, Mass. — "The Memoirs of Mrs. Mary Dexter." a fine tree calf copy printed in Plymouth by Allen Danforth in 1823.

(**THANKS** is a small word, but like **IF**, when used sincerely has a very BIG feeling and meaning. We write it very sincerely to you all.)

HOW I BECAME AN ANTIQUARIAN

by Lyman Butler

Although I cannot pin point the exact date that I became interested in old places and things, I have an idea it was at a meeting of a church club at The Green, to which my Wife and I belonged. The guest speaker one night was G. Ward Stetson who brought with him several old swords and pieces of army equipment from American Wars. After a very entertaining and educational talk, we examined the collection and found them very interesting. Up until that time, I had not thought much about antiques, and the only museums I had seen were the Bourne Whaling Museum in New Bedford (Old Dartmouth Historical Society), and the Science Museum in Boston, neither of which have the old homey things in smaller museums (and larger!) now springing up all over the U.S.A.

Slowly my enthusiasm grew, and I found myself feeling badly when one by one our old landmarks were destroyed in the name of progress. I for one was very glad when I read in the Gazette that the Selectmen had deeded to our Historical Association the two old houses on Jackson street.

Although I knew there was a historical society in town, I had not paid much attention to it. When the museum was in the planning stage, and everyone was contributing money and time to get the project started, I began to get the fever. (Editor's note:—The most virulent case I ever saw, and still going stronger than ever)

Remembering that in my attic I had a small xylophone that Mrs. Tom Thumb and Count Magri used when on the stage, I offered it to the museum: result—Mertie Witbeck and Larry Romaine talked us into membership! He put me to work right away or perhaps I should say the Museum Committee. I offered to take care of the grounds as they were only attended by volunteers in spare time. I became more and more interested, and have watched our museum grow from a few furnished rooms and exhibits to two very full buildings, with a new one to be built.

We started going to auctions, and there I got acquainted with all kinds of antiques and museum pieces. Shortly after joining, I was appointed to the museum committee, and have tried to do my part. Occasionally I pick up articles at auction that I think will fit some of our many collections and exhibits. When anyone mentions old things they don't want, and if they are needed on Jackson street, that's there they end up. .

More and more museums are opening all around as people realize the value of these almost forgotten, once useful things which are fast disappearing. They are becoming conscious that the only safe preservation is to be found in these institutions, and are donating their heirlooms. Whenever we go on a trip we try to visit as many museums as possible. I got started a little late but am trying to make up for lost time. I hope some of the younger folks will read this article and get interested, for we sure can use help of all kinds, and, us old timers won't be around forever.

We have had support from the Girl Scouts and other groups. We need more young people like Martha Howard and Ted Eayrs Jr., who has done so much work at Oliver Mill Park, and, as our assistant curator has created so many new exhibits and worked so hard at the museum. (Can't we find a dozen like these two? Ed's. Note).

When calling on Earl Vigers recently to pick up a copy of Mrs. Viger's "History of Lakeville," he asked how we went about starting a museum. He thinks they may have the Old Town Hall and possibly the Grove Chapel available soon. (Ed's. Note:—Wonderful. Why not?) Mr. Viger's Mother had many antiques, and now that she has passed on her children would like to have them preserved for future generations. I told him I hadn't been a member very long, but was sure some of the older members would be glad (Ed's. Note:—Most of course and decidedly.) to give them some pointers when the time comes. I hope we may have a neighbor historical museum in the near future.

From an old scrap book compiled in the 1880's

Note at bottom of article: "We picked this letter up and can hardly tell if the writer is in earnest and understands himself, or is a "green 'un." Sometimes we think the latter, but while we believe in our fire department and have faith in and the greatest respect for our night watchman—who of course never sleeps while on duty—and all the officers— and no one will dispute the vigilance and thoughtfulness of the one who has care of the hall, we cannot forbear publishing this for the bit of humor there is in it.

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Dear Neffew:

I will write you a few lines to let you know how near I come to calling on you last night, and also my experience in your little city, as you call it. Being an old soldier, I had an invitation to see the officers of the Grand Army, Ladies' Relief Corps and Sons of Veterans, installed. Now I dident know what that ment. I thought perhaps they had stalls to put them in, as they do horses, but I dident see anything that looked like stalls or horses till they come to eat supper, then if they dident eat like horses they did like another animal that I could mention. After eating about an hour and a half, they began speech-making and such, and were just getting warmed up when there was an alarm of fire. Now, you know I live in the country, and don't know much about fire business, excepting what I read in your papers, for I take the GAZETTE and have read all the reports of your chief engineer and the fire department, and of the valuable information other chief engineers have received from your chief engineer by visiting your town, and how far and high you could sling water, and how to rescue people from the fifth, sixth and seventh stories of your houses, with their extension ladders. I had read so much that I fairly yearned to see the workings of this great department. As I said before, we were eating supper, when in rushed a young man, who jumped into a chair, and waved his hand over my head as Moses did over the red sea, and shout (I suppose) the alarm cry of the department. It was something like this, "Ladies and gentlemen, there's a devil of a fire somewhere, you will hear the alarm pretty darn soon," and disappeared down the stairs like a chipmunk into his hole. We all made a rush for the door, and I fell over two or three chairs, stepped on a ladiy's dress, tore it nearly off, and landed on my head near the foot of the hall; one more jump and I was sliding down the stairs on back part of my leather jacket; made one more jump and brought up with my face against one of the columns of the building, and if I dident see fire, I did stars. I took a new start, and after running against a post in the town-house lot and disarranging my pants, some of my friends came up and we took a survey of the town and finally located the fire up at Court end. I expected to see my friends do some tall running, but they dident seem to be at all excited. I have sence learned that you have so much confidence in your department that the biggest blaze does not excite you in the least. They mearly put their hands in their pockets and walked down the street in the direction of the fire. One man remarked that he thought that it was Joe Bills' house that was on fire; another said it was Deacon Joe's woodbarn, and that we were within a quarter of a mile of it then—and that the fire police would not allow us to go much nearer, as they were very vigalent. So we staid where we were and saw the woodbarn burn down. Then we wended out way back, sober but wiser men. We met one man, two women, and a dog going to the fire. They seemed considerably excited, especially the women and dog. I returned to the hall for your aunt, whom I met on the stairs. She informed me that there had been a great deal of excitement sence I left the hall, owing to the officer who had charge of the hall informing them that he was an officer in the fire department (1st assistant, I think) and that the department could not be aloud to play until he got there, and as he was under heavy bonds for the safety of the G.A.R. property, he should be obliged to request them to clear off the tables and wash the dishes as soon as possible so that he could lock the building, as no one else was aloud to have the keys but him. (So they hurried) As I said before, I met your aunt on the stairs. We walked down to Center street. Just as the bell on the Methodist church struck the alarm, the door of the engine house across the street flew open. Now, thinks I, I will see the great department, but out rushed one man with the hose carriage and made a good start for the fire, but when he struck Center street he must have forgot something for he stopped, and after thinking it over he seized the bell and commenced to ring, and I don't know but what he is ringing now. I would suggest one thing to the department, if I might be aloud to do so, and that is, to have two men to each carriage, so that one could ring while the other pulled the cart. As we walked up the street an excited man rished out of a house, with a lantern, yelling, "fire, fire." We asked him if he ment the fire that we went to half an hour ago, or if there was a new one? He said he dident know or care, but must do his duty as he was an officer in the department, 1st assistant, I think) He said he must hurry and wake up the night-watch before the department run over him. He said he liked to yell at him when he was asleep, as he was so young and friskey he liked to see him whoop 'em up. We bid him good night. We had gone but a few steps, when up came a window, and out came a head and a voice asked, "Where's the fire?" We told him it was the woodbarn of Deacon Joe's. He says, "Is it coming this way?" We asked him if he ment the woodbarn or the department? Down came the window and shut out the following: "You go to a hotter fire than Deacon Jo's woodbarn." We had walked but a short distance when we met another officer of the department. As every one I had met before had been a 1st assistant, I concluded that this must be the last assistant. I thought I would give him a piece of my mind on the fire department, and I did so. He told me that he had belonged to the department a great many years, and that he had always been an officer, and that he had always found the men prompt and right on time—in drawing their pay,—and that he knew what he was talking about. I asked him what office he held? He said he was 1st assistant in the pay department and that he held the suction hose in that department, and a great deal more he could tell me, but it was getting late, so we bid him good-night. Your aunt said she would like to know what time it was. I told her if I could catch that fire-bug on that telephone pole I would put him on my watch, as we used to in the army, and I could tell her the time. She says, "A fire-fly this time of year?" I says, "Yes. See him?" So I took off my hat, crept up to the pole, gave one jump, and had him under the hat. Your aunt came up holding on to her nose, and says, "I should think you had a skunk." I had just reached under the hat to get the bug, when a man across the street sang out, "Let that street lamp alone, you damphool." and I did so. Now, I don't doubt but what you have got a great department, and a good engineer, and a lot of 1st assistants, but I think that night is no time for a fire, and if anybody wants to see your department work they must come in the day time. But as I said, your people have full confidence in them, and seemed to sleep peacefully through all the excitement of the fire alarm. Come and see us when you can.

Your Uncle.

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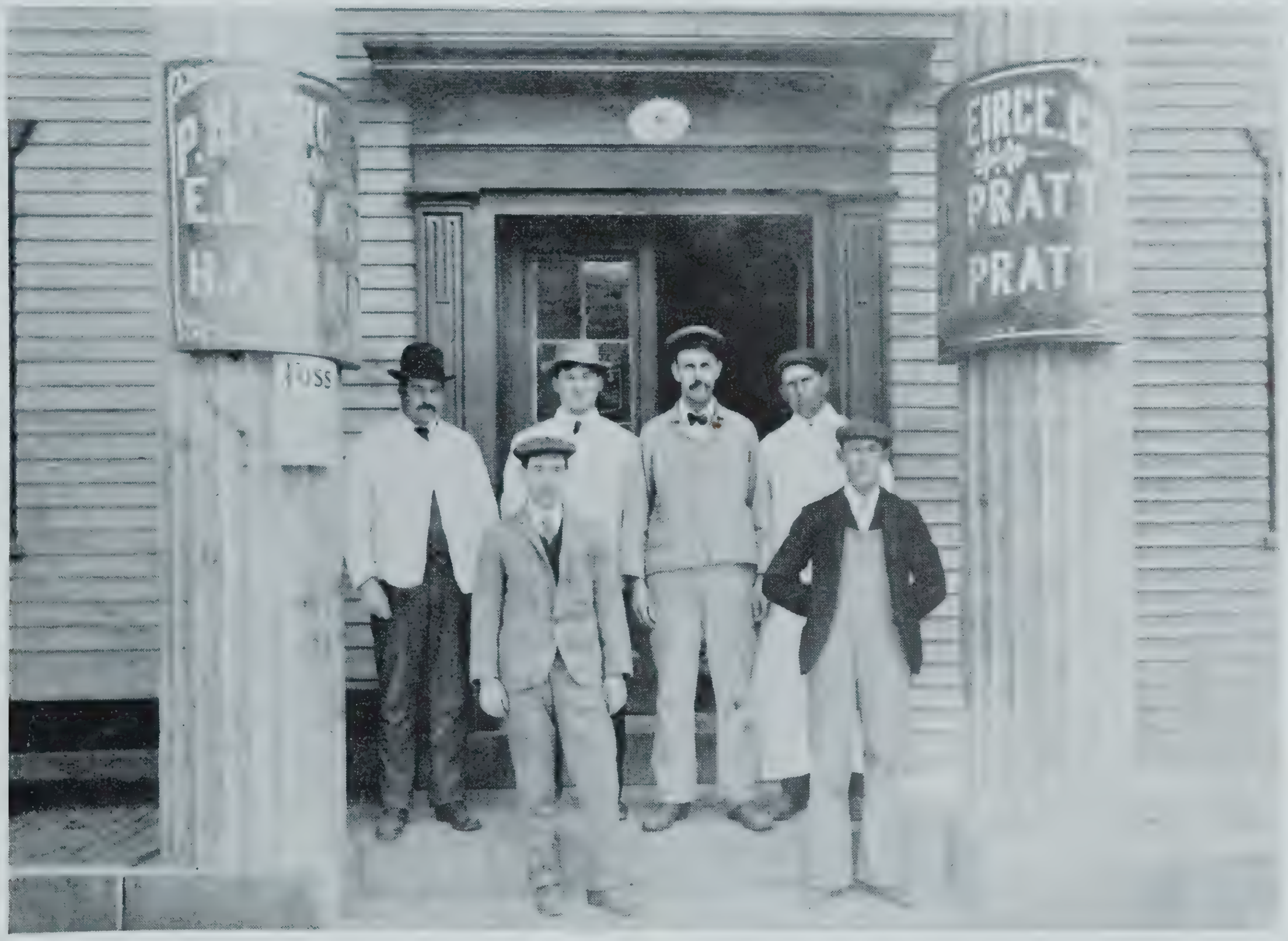

PEIRCE STORE DOORWAY ABOUT 1900

BACK ROW, left to right: Elton L. Pratt, Chester H. Porter, William Fessenden, and Louis Keyes.

FRONT ROW, left to right: Herbert A. Pratt, and Arthur Coffin.

Anyone who was a customer of the old P. H. Peirce grocery store, will immediately recognize these men who served them as clerks and as drivers of the grocery wagon that called on residents of outlying districts of the town where the coming of the grocery cart was a much anticipated event, the driver calling one day to take orders, delivering the next and bringing interesting items of news from uptown.

The first man on the left is Elton L. Pratt who, with his brother Herbert, took over the grocery store after the death of Thomas S. Peirce. At that time Mr. Pratt owned and resided with his family at 12 Myrtle street, later going to Lakeville to live when his uncle, Joseph Pratt, left him an estate in that town, a large house and apple orchard at the corner of Main street and Staples Shore Road.

Next in the back row is Chester Porter, brother of Mrs. Elton Pratt, who always made his home in the East Middleboro section of the town. Standing next to Mr. Porter is William Fessenden, a life-long resident of "the Green." Last in the back row is Louis Keyes whose family resided in the western section of the town at the corner of West End Avenue and Centre streets. Mr. Keyes was the son of Benjamin Keyes, a prominent member of the G.A.R. After his marriage, Louis Keyes purchased the house directly across the street from the family home, living there the rest of his life.

In the front row, left, is Herbert Pratt, brother of Elton and a partner in the business. Mr. Pratt built and lived in the house on Peirce street now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph C. Whitcomb. On the right is Arthur Coffin. Mr. Coffin was in company with Ernest S. Pratt in the early days of his ice business and was the first to drive the new ice wagon with its matched pair of black horses. Mr. Coffin boarded with the Bisbee family on Coombs street, marrying the daughter, Eva, and later residing on Southworth street in Lakeville and in North Lakeville.

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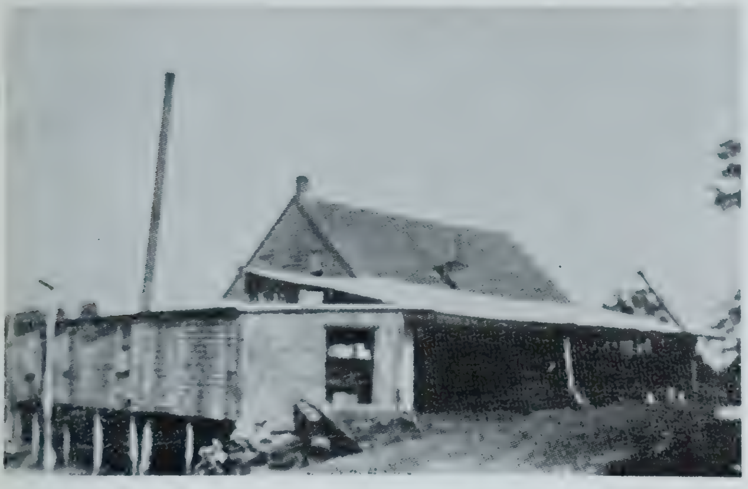

THE CALIFORNIA MILLS

THE CEDAR CRANBERRY BARREL
made at
THE CALIFORNIA MILLS

by Chester M. Washburn

This barrel was made at the California Mills in Plympton, Mass., owned by Asaph F. Washburn and Edwin E. Soule. The cedar was cut from the local swamps.

It was offered for sale in the early part of the 20th century. The California Mills was the only mill that made barrels of cedar at the time. The mill was equipped with new machines, including two with a barrel shaped saw with teeth on one end to saw the cedar bolts 30 inches long. This bolt was placed on a carriage that was propelled back and forth. The stave when sawed was in a rounded shape to make the barrel. From here it was sent to a machine that cut the ends, jointed the stave, wider in the middle than at both ends. This was to make the bilge when it was coopered. From this machine it went to the barrel. From here it was sent to the planer that planed one side of the stave, then to the machine that made the groove for the barrel head, and also shaped the end of the stave. The staves, after milling, were stored in a long open shed until dry.

The barrel heads were made of white pine in a machine that cut the two bevels to fit the groove in the staves, and two machines were bought to make hoops for the barrels. The best lumber used at that time was elm. Slowly but surely the blight killed off the elm trees and the source of supply could not meet the demand. Afterwards many of the hoops came by freight from Missouri.

The next operation after the staves were thoroughly dried was to take them to the cooper's shop. No power was needed here as it was all manual labor. The first step was to set the barrel in a tub with an iron ring in the bottom which was the right diameter for the end of the barrel so that the head would fit in the groove of the staves. The iron ring was filled with staves set on one end around the ring in the tub. Then a rope fastened to a treadle, long enough to encircle the top of the staves, was tightened with the treadle which pulled the staves together at the top. Then another ring was placed over the top to hold the barrel in shape. Then the truss hoop was placed over the barrel and set on the stove to set the staves before the elm hoops were nailed together. ***** There were six hoops on each barrel — two on each end, and two on each bilge.

The regular days work for a cooper was ninety barrels at ten cents a barrel. This cedar barrel proved its value in the packing houses. At one time three coopers were employed. They were: — Charles Potter, Clarence Soule, and Chester Washburn.

***** The Middleboro Historical Museum is proud to own a cooper's barrel stove, presented by Albert Soule, that was used in the California Mills. If you've never seen one, drop in. I doubt if there are other examples in museums today.

THE MIDDLEBOROUGH ANTIQUARIAN
Middleborough, Mass.
VOLUME VIII 1966 Number 4

Lawrence B. Romaine .... Editor
Mertie E. Romaine .... Associate Editor
Miss Martha J. Howard .... Proof Reader

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Adults .... .50
Children, 12 and under .... .10

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Subscriptions to The Antiquarian $2.00 annually.

Miss Ruth Gates .... Corresponding Secretary
71 Thompson Street, R.F.D. #2, Middleboro

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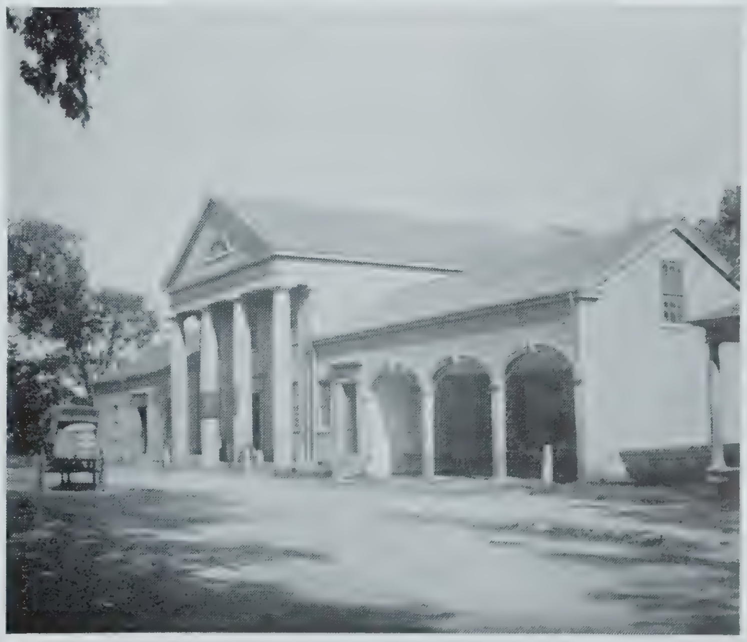

P. H. PEIRCE STORE SHOWING THE OLD CARRIAGE SHED. OUR MODEL FOR THE NEW BUILDING ON LINCOLN STREET.
(Original photo taken by Harry LeBaron Sampson—donated by Alton G. Pratt)

Can anyone tell us by whom and for what purpose the small one room building on the corner of Jackson and North Main streets was built? The picture above only shows a corner post that held the porch, but it was built at the same time as the Peirce Store, and nobody seems to know why! It was last used by Jeffrey Moody as a cobblers' shop. Can you help us out?

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MIDDLEBOROUGH, MASSACHUSETTS

WHERE THE WOODBINE TWINETH

by Susan B. Brackett

An interesting subject and one that grows more intriguing each passing day, with the mushroom growth of the super-highway, is the origin of roads. The original means of communication between the early settlers were, of course, the Indian paths. There are descriptions of the various paths in this area in "History of the Town of Middleboro, Massachusetts," by Thomas Weston (See pages 303-305). These started, or converged, on the Nemasket river at "The Wading Place" on East Main street, west of the present Winthrop-Atkins plant. These paths, or trails, wound for miles following the terrain around hills and bodies of water.

One hundred years ago, or even fifty, it was a pleasure for people who enjoyed driving with horse and carriage to just ride through the woods roads, following along the lakes and sometimes wondering just where the road would come out.

When this scribe was a small girl she went with relatives on just such a drive to Carver. In those days there was not a single house on Rocky Gutter street from the time one left the home of Mr. Bradford Chace until one came out on France street at the Weston place. There had been a house occupied by the Jabez Cobb family on Rocky Gutter street which had burned sometime before. Finally this child asked, "Is this where the woodbine twineth?" As the child was between three and four at the time, the aunt and uncle were somewhat startled. It turned out that Mother, when she lost or mislaid anything, would say, "I guess it has gone where the woodbine twineth." How the child knew the plant grew in such an area still remains a mystery.

This article concerns "Neck Road," later to become "Marion Road." The late Charles R. Swift told me this was once a part of the "Dartmouth Path." It is more than possible that originally it was. (See "History of the Town of Lakeville, Massachusetts," compiled by the late Gladys Vigers, Chapter XIV: "The Acushnet path and the Dartmouth path both headed toward New Bedford and were not far apart. They started at Muttock in Middleboro and followed the line of the old road to New Bedford. This was the old trail which was frequently followed by the Indians when going for supplies of shell-fish." It is reasonable, therefore, to believe that "Neck Road" deviated from the Dartmouth Path as stated by Mr. Swift.

Just beyond the late Mr. Swift's home going north, the trail left Marion Road, going through what came to be known as the "Gibbs Neighborhood," coming into and crossing Miller street and eventually reaching the before mentioned "Wading Place." Going north on Marion Road, the Wappanucket Trail entered on the left.

This writer has in her possession, "A Map of the Town of Middleborough, Plymouth County, Mass. Surveyed by order of the town by H. F. Walling, Superintendent of the State Map, 1855. Scale 1/2400, Ford Mayer & Co., Lith., 95 Fulton St., New York." In 1955, an article was written for the Middleboro Gazette entitled, "Marion Road: dwellings and residents during the 1800's and 1900's." The data for this article was obtained from a map of 1857. Both maps show details of ownership and it is interesting to note, even in those days, how many changes there were in two years.

Research seems to indicate that for many years there were few changes on "Neck Road." Horse and man plodded along on an exceptionally lovely road to travel, bordered as it was by stone walls, lovely trees, flowers and ferns, particularly the wild rose in its time, and in the fall by brilliant autumn colors. Then people seemed to realize that improvements were due and we find, according to records, numerous petitions were filed:

1/1/1889 No. 39

Petitioners

Geo. F. Sisson et als widening at Jct. of Cherry Street and also widening for distance of 221 feet near Cherry Street and specific repairs. Recorded Book 9, Page 306.

7/28/1925 No. 650

Selectmen specify repair of specified parts of the highway. (See also Pond Street, Book 15, Page 103.)

11/3/1926 No. 670

Selectmen. Relocation from Perry St. Nthly about 1200 feet (See also Perry & Miller St.) Note: This decree superseded 10/18/1927.

3/9/1927 No. 708

Selectmen. Specific repairs to unspecified sections. Book 15, Page 480.

7/26/1927

Selectmen Awards on 11/3/1926

Decree Book 15, P. 524.

10 18/1927 No. 670

Com. Selectmen

Amendment to decree of 11/3/1926 so as to layout curve on Ely and no more. (See also Perry and Miller Street. Book 15, P. 602. Plan 16, Page 1193.

We find: Marion Road-Neck St., Middleboro Town Records, Page 48. Voted to change the name of Neck Street to Marion Road, March 4, 1901, at a Town Meeting.
From Road Records Vol. I, Pages 177/178

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Plymouth ss
1889
Geo. F. Sisson & others

On the petition of George F. Sisson and others representing that the highway in Middleborough, known as Neck and Cherry streets in said County of Plymouth from Rochester line near the house of the late Horatio Leonard to that part of Cherry Street at or near the house of the late Abraham Thomas are narrow, crooked and inconvenient and praying the County Commissioners to view the premises and widen, straighten or locate anew said roads and discontinue such parts of the highway as may be useless or make such alterations and improvements as they may deem necessary for the public good.

The County Commissioners pursuant to an order of notice for that purpose duly published, posted and served, by which all persons and corporations interested had due and legal notice met to view the premises and to hear all persons and corporations who desired to be heard at the dwelling house of George F. Sisson in Middleborough, in said County of Plymouth, on the twenty-eighth day of September A.D. 1888 at eleven of the clock in the forenoon and after viewing said premises and hearing persons and corporations who desired to be heard they adjourned and continued said hearing for further consideration, all persons and corporations interested having due notice thereof to the next Regular Meeting of said County Commissioners held at the Court House in Plymouth on the first Tuesday in January A.D. 1889 at 10 of the clock in the forenoon when and where they adjudicate and determine, no person or corporation then or at any other time objecting thereto, that the common convenience and public necessity require that the

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prayer of said petition should in part be granted, and that portions of said streets should be widened and specific repairs made and they proceed to widen said highways and order specific repairs to be made thereon and make return of their proceedings as hereinafter set forth, to wit:

Cherry Street:

Began to widen said highway at a stone bound standing in the northwesterly side of Cherry Street at the angle of the stone wall against the lands of Francis Osborne, thence running South 32 degrees West 145 feet across Cherry Street to a stone bound standing at the corner of Neck Street, thence South 11 degrees 30′ East 110 feet across Neck Street to a stone bound.

Said section of highway is to extend 50 feet wide on the Southeasterly sideline and stone bounds, and the said easterly line of said widening is to extend in lines parallel with the above given courses and 50 feet therefrom, both northerly and southerly until they intersect the old highway.

Neck Street

Then begin to widen said Neck Street on the Westerly side at a stone bound standing against the land of Lorenzo McKenney, thence running South 36 degrees East 25 feet, thence South 30 degrees East 25 feet, thence South 25 degrees East 25 feet, thence South 16 degrees East 25 feet; thence South 9 degrees 15″ East 25 feet; thence South 7 degrees East 25 feet, thence South 3 degrees 30″ East 71 feet on land of Lorenzo McKenney to a stone bound standing by the side of the highway two feet Easterly from a large cherry tree in said McKenney's land. Stone bounds are to be placed at all of the foregoing angles.

The inhabitants of the town of Middleborough are hereby ordered to cause said widenings to be worked so as to give a good road-bed over the above named sectional safe and convenient for public travel, also to make repairs upon the other parts of said highways hereafter described in manner as follows, to wit:

The sections of highway lying between the houses of John Clarke and the small hill north of said house is to be cut down two feet at its highest point and the earth from said cutting deposited upon the sides of the road-bed in such manner as to give a safe and convenient way for travel over said section.

The section between the houses of Abram Cushman and George Gammons is to be worked so as to give a roadbed safe and convenient for public travel not less than twenty-five feet wide, so constructed so as to be free from surface water.

The section of highway between the houses of Lorenzo McKenney and Charles Sherman is to be filled at the foot of the hill so as to give a roadbed not less than twenty-five feet wide through the low ground portion of said section, and the embankment on the easterly side guarded by a sufficient railing. The earth for filling said portion to be taken from the hill in said highway near the home of said Sherman.

All said repairs are to be made and said sections of widening worked in such manner as above specified to the acceptance of said County Commissioners before the first day of September A.D. 1889.

Owners of land taken for widening of said highway are hereby ordered to remove their trees, fences and other obstructions from the same before the first day of June 1889.

At the same time awarded to the several persons whose lands are taken for said highways the several sums hereafter named to be paid from the County Treasury upon warrants to be drawn therefor, so soon as said lands shall be entered upon and possession taken of the same for the purpose of constructing said highways, to wit: to Lorenzo McKenney $11.00

Given under our hand and seal at Plymouth in the County of Plymouth this first day of January A.D. 1889.

Signed Charles H. Paine
Jedediah Dwelley
William Rankin
County Commissioners

A true copy Albert W. H. Whitman, Clerk
A true copy C. T. Thatcher, Town Clerk.

NOTE: The above was copied at the Town Clerk's office in Middleboro, Mass. by Susan B. Brackett on Feb. 14, 1966.

There seem to have been no drastic changes on the street now known as Marion Road, except that now it has a hard surface and regular repairs are made from time to time. It is still a lovely area in which to take a ride — though no one takes it leisurely in this day and age.

COUNTRY STORE AT RAYNHAM FAIR

For the second year, the Middleboro Agricultural Society invited the Middleboro Historical Museum to conduct a country store at the Raynham Fair for one week beginning June 15th. As far as possible, a replica of the Peirce Country Store was set up in a separate building assigned to us, with articles from the store presenting an atmosphere of an old general store.

On counters were arranged for sale the "Treasures and Trash" contributed by friends and members of the Middleboro Historical Association and a fine display it was, ranging from radios and trunks, dishes and linens to souvenir postcards. We also sold about fifty pounds of penny candy, this being the only opportunity on the Fair grounds for the children to spend their pennies.

An added feature this year was an auction, held on the last night of the Fair. For this Mr. and Mrs. Harold Hall made a wonderful contribution, the contents of Mrs. Hall's late mother's summer cottage in Lakeville. With this collection, added to articles contributed by members of the Historical Association and what was not sold of the "Treasures and Trash," the auction brought a total of almost three hundred dollars, with much credit due to the auctioneer, Mr. Arthur Benson.

Sales of "Treasures and Trash" and candy in the store brought another $300, so that the entire proceeds of the Country Store was $600.

Charles Judge and Mrs. Romaine staffed the store each afternoon and evening, assisted by Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Judge and members of the Association who volunteered to help.

May we remind you all that there will no doubt be another opportunity next year, and it would be very much appreciated if you would set aside and save your "Treasures and Trash" for next year's Country Store. MER

OVERHEARD IN A BARBER SHOP

I happened to be uptown the other day ducking about looking for a square meal when I scuttled into the barber shop by mistake — nothing but hair on the floor, and a few ashes from careless cigars etc. I was about to sneak out when a guy in the chair says to the barber:—"Say, been down on Jackson street lately?" The barber says "Nope, but I understand they've got a new parking lot and a new wide slick road there." "Yea," says the other guy, "but they gotta a museum too." "A WHAT?" says the barber. "A Museum," says the other chap, "you know, historical museum. Civil War uniforms, guns and pictures, a lotta stuff from the Old Peirce Store, General Tom Thumb and his Wife—SAY, you'd oughta go down there. It's great. "General Tom," says this barber, "Well, say I thought he up and died a few years ago." "Oh sure," says this new historian, "sure, but they got his clothes, account books, furniture and pictures. And say, you know he was only 36″ tall, and his wife even smaller. Man, I'll tell you it's quite a show. Two buildings loaded from a bonnet to a whaling harpoon." "No kiddin'," says the barber, "IN MIDDLEBORO?" "Sure, fifty cents for you and ten cents for the kids. Most as good as a movie, or even Sturbridge Village, and you don't have to travel so durned far — it's right here in your own back yard." "Well, well, what do y' know about that. I'll have to drop in. I wonder why they don't advertise all this in the Gazette or put out a paper or circulars or something like that so us folks would know about it?" (Well, Sir, at that one I had to run. Here these guys have been breaking their necks with circulars, Antiquarians, with the Gazette helping almost every week or so and this dumb cluck along with about 8000 others had never even heard of my nice little hangout. If I hadn't got out then, I'd have bitten him, and that wouldn't have been healthy. He wouldn't have understood at all. Oh, well, HOW CAN you get folks to read and be interested in their own local history??? Let me know.)

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SOME HISTORY WITH REMINISCENCES OF LAKESIDE

by William L. Waugh

There are several parts of Middleboro that are unique in their relationship to the town, namely summer communities that are found at Wood's Pond, Lake Tispaquin and Assawompsett Pond. They may be inhabited only a small part of the twelve months of the year, but are nevertheless part of the history of the town. I am most familiar with Lakeside on Assawompsett, as I have been spending parts of my summers there ever since I was born. My family has owned a summer cottage at the lake since 1900. I shall write about how Lakeside got started and then reminisce a little about some of the people who have vacationed there.

The first cottage was built by Captain Stephen Gibbs, a whaling skipper, who sailed out of New Bedford, but whose home was in Middleboro. The camp was a one room affair, a place to keep warm in the winter when ice fishing, and a convenient retreat in which to spend the day in the summer. As a matter of fact, the first cottages at Lakeside were merely places to "spend the day." Captain Gibbs and the original builders bought their lots on the shore of the pond from Isaac Vaughn, whose farm ran from the lake to Vaughn street.

The number of cottages has varied somewhat from time to time as some have been moved away or torn down. The largest number at the shore at any one time seems to have been thirty-two.

By a special act of the Massachusetts Legislature in 1875, the city of Taunton was authorized to use Assawompsett Pond as a water supply. In 1924, another special act authorized the three cities of Fall River, New Bedford and Taunton to use the waters of Assawompsett, Pocksha, Big and Little Quitticas and Long Pond to supply their cities with water. Up until this time bathing and swimming had been permitted in the ponds. The city of New Bedford uses Big and Little Quitticas as a source of their city water, and these ponds are closed to boating, bathing and fishing. The option the city of Fall River has on Long Pond has never been taken up as that city uses Wattuppa Pond; thus, Long Pond is still free of restrictions. The city of Taunton uses Elders Pond as a water supply. Today, fishing and boating only are permitted on Pocksha and Assawompsett, and this only with the permission of the cities of Taunton and New Bedford. In the early nineteen twenties, the State of Massachusetts condemned a part of Lakeside as a swamp too low for the public's good where drinking water was concerned; this is the part known as Owl Swamp. Ten camps were either torn down or moved away in this area, eleven camps remaining.

#1 CENTER: Cottage built by Charles (Cobby) Wood, and occupied by The Sands of Sands, Taylor & Wood Inc., and later, at various times, by Samuel S. Lovell, Clifford S. Lovell and William C. Waugh. It is now owned by Marjorie W. Halahan and William L. Waugh.

RIGHT: Cottage built by Ernest Maxim. It was occupied by Leighton and Louise Maxim for many years.

At one time, John B. LeBaron of Middleboro had an ice house on the shore of the pond at Lakeside and cut ice on Assawompsett in the winter. This industry, of course, has long ago given way to the electric refrigerator and manufactured ice.

Not too many years ago, in the nineteen twenties and early nineteen thirties, people would come to Lakeside selling vegetables in the summer, take orders for groceries, and deliver ice. Captain Bradford, a retired sea captain, who lived on the farm where Middleboro fireman, John McCarthy, now lives with his family, raised vegetables and came in a couple of times a week. There is a story of the Captain forgetting the name "radishes" as he was telling what he had to sell. However, he recovered quickly and said, "And under the seat we have some of those little red round things." Mr. Pratt, who was employed by the P. H. Peirce grocery store, came one day for orders and returned the next with the groceries. Joe Freitas competed with Captain Bradford with fresh vegetables and sold his from a wagon pulled by a horse named "Dynamite."

#2 LEFT: Cottage built by Captain Stephen Gibbs, the first cottage at Lakeside. Occupied by his Son, Carl L. Gibbs for many years, and now occupied by another Son, James Gibbs of Middletown, N.Y.

CENTER: Cottage owned for many years by George H. Heath, in the kitchen of which Goofy stole the steak. Now property of City of New Bedford.

RIGHT: Cottage owned by Thomas L. Heath, now occupied by Tom and his Mother, Mrs. Nina Heath.

William C. Waugh, who prides himself in being one of the finest bakemasters in Massachusetts, for a number of years put on clambakes at Lakeside for various business organizations such as the National Fireworks, the Massachusetts Retail Grocers Association and the Waldorf Corporation, as well as private bakes for his close friends.

Humor and high spirits have always characterized the inhabitants at Lakeside. The people have been good livers and contributors to humanity. Some of them who have lived here include J. Stearns Cushing, formerly Middleboro Superintendent of Schools. I remember Mr. Cushing as a calm and collected man who liked to sit in a chair, smoke a pipe and play a hand of cards. His father, J. Herbert Cushing, was always generous with rides downtown when I was young, where he went every day in the summer, after he retired from business, to play cards at the Commercial Club.

Frank Woodward, a good man and a godly one if there ever was one, lived next door at Lakeside. He was Deacon of the Central Methodist Church in Middleboro, and believed neither in playing games on Sunday or in taking the Lord's name in vain. I remember upsetting him one Sunday afternoon by inadvertently swearing where he could hear me. It was one of the hottest days of the summer. I heard a loud bang and turned around to see his windows shut tight so he could hear no more.

Ernest Maxim, who had a cottage on the other side of mine, delighted in being the first to have ripe tomatoes in his garden each summer. One year, a week or so previous to the appearance of red tomatoes, some of his neighbors bought a ripe tomato at a store and attached it to one of Ernest's vines. Imagine the look on his face when confronted with this.

Carl Gibbs was a man with a thousand practical jokes. One summer Clifford S. Lovell, who had been the butt of some of Carl's jokes, by way of revenge, told someone he had caught a large turtle and thought it would be funny if the turtle got into Carl's house at night. The story goes that what Cliff had said got back to Gibbs, and that Carl insisted on he and his wife Emma, sleeping with their windows locked tight on a hot summer's night.

Icabod Atwood, otherwise known as Fred Atwood, lived on the Ben Lovell Farm where Francis Freitas now lives and had a friendly collie named "Goopy." One evening in the winter he was at George Heath's camp listening to George tell stories. George had bought a large steak and left it on the table in the kitchen. Part way through one of the stories, which sometimes took an hour to tell, he just happened to go out in the kitchen. He arrived just in time to see Goopy going out the door with the steak.

One occasion I shall never forget was the day Harold Wood's pigs broke loose from their pig-pen and went down to Clara Tripp's old-fashioned flower garden. They trampled through the garden, leaving it very much the worse for wear. I can hear Aunt Clara today suggesting that Harold build a stronger pig-pen.

WORDS OF APPRECIATION

During July we took several groups from our school system's SUMMER READING PROGRAM through our museum buildings. These were morning projects when the museum was not open to the public, and very rewarding. Some of the letters written by the youngsters in Mrs. William Hoye's group are amusing and gratifying, and I think worthy copy for this issue of the Antiquarian.

> "Dear Mr. and Mrs. Romaine:
>
> Thank you so much for showing us the museum. I liked especially the toys and the eagle and the little pot, and the chairs too."
>
> Another reads:—
>
> "Thank you so much for showing us the museum. I especially liked the MUSKETS, THE EAGLE and the BODIES OF THE LADIES — AND TOM THUMB."

I won't bore you all with too much of this, but it is interesting to know what our coming generation of citizens liked "especially" in this field of long forgotten memorabilia. Of course THE EAGLE is the huge stuffed one that for so many years guarded our G. A. R. Headquarters, the POTS are the small ones that sat underneath our children's "potty-chairs or sick chairs" as they are called, AND the bodies of the ladies are the dressmaking forms on which we display our costumes. Other favorites are the Meat Cutting Machine (that makes a delightful racket in the Peirce Store), Civil War Cannon Balls, the model of an old New Bedford Whaler, and in every letter, THE PENNY CANDY in the Peirce Store was a top item. One letter added:—"I want to come again to see you because you are both very nice people." (Of course we rather liked that one especially too!)

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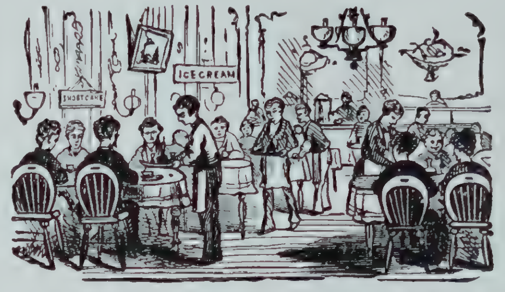

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COLLEGE ICE AT PASZTOR AND KLAR'S

by Lyman Butler

Probably I have told of Pasztor and Klar's bake shop and about the peanut butter, but I don't believe I have ever written about the college ices that were sold there. All us kids were interested in were ice cream cones, but the older folks used to like to go in and sit down at a table and have their ice cream served to them in a dish. At Primo's Pastime this was the custom as well as at Tripp's and Farrar's. I do not know when the first dressed-up dish of ice cream was served in town but I know when I had mine. I don't believe I was even going to school. I was up-town with my mother and we had been to visit her sister, my Aunt Annie, and before we were to start for home Aunt Annie said, "Let's go up to Pasztor and Klar's for a college ice." I had never heard of a college ice and I doubt if I even knew what a college was, but I knew if it was an ice, it had to be some sort of ice cream.

It sure was. I believe this was my first trip into the ice cream parlor which was in the rear of the bakery shop. I can see the big fans turning now, stirring up the air to give the effect of being cool, but only stirring up the air a bit. They moved slowly but did the trick O.K. We went to a table and sat down. The tables were round and had steel legs. The chairs were built the same and were probably the first ice cream chairs, so called. Now they are collector's items and are not too plentiful.

To get back to the table, Mrs. Pasztor came over to get our order. My mother had a strawberry ice and my aunt said she would have the same. Well, I wasn't sure what I wanted and as I took too long to decide, mother told Mrs. Pasztor to bring the same. Shortly back she came with the tray and our ices. They were big scoops of strawberry ice cream with some fresh strawberries poured over the top and a dab of real homemade whipped cream and nuts.

It's a good thing that in those days not many people worried about their calories, for I'll bet that dish was loaded. Then they used plenty of cream in the ice cream instead of the artificial stuff they use today, just enough cream to cover the law.

I know it was smacking good and in later years I used to have my share of that kind of dish. It was not long before they began to make other dishes like the banana split or royal, then the hot fudge and caramel dishes, milk shakes and finally frappes. Now, of course, you never hear of a college ice; now it is a sundae.

Yes, the old ice cream parlor is now a barber shop and there are no more big fans, except in the memories of some of us who had the pleasure of sitting down to a college ice at Pasztor and Klar's ice cream parlor.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION AND MUSEUM NEWS

Friday and Saturday, Sept. 30 and Oct. 1, 1966, Mr. and Mrs. Romaine attended The New England Conference of the American Association of Museums, at Salem, Mass., guests of the Essex Institute and the Peabody Museum, representing the Middleborough Historical Association and the Middleborough Historical Museum. The addresses and reports of many of our contemporary historical museums were educational and will, I hope, spur us on to further improvements on Jackson street. Budgets for exhibits and expansion and preservation run from our own small goals of about $1,200.00 to roughly hundreds of thousands of dollars. The speakers stressed dedication to preservation at any cost. We feel that we gained a great deal of the old "know how," and perhaps contributed Middleborough's "mite" to those who are still struggling for a museum of their own, and proper preservation.

The Bay State Historical League held its Fall Meeting October 1966 in Barnstable, on Cape Cod at Bacon Farm Inn. Miss Pauline Blanchard, secretary of our Association, and Miss Ruth Gates, corresponding secretary, attended. There isn't time until "deadline" to have their reports in this issue, but I am sure there will be further notes in February — Vol. 9 #1.

Many years ago, the Clifford Welds lived at the Rock, in the old Clark home that has now become the nursing home "Fairhavens." They used a fine old ROCKAWAY carriage to meet trains at the Rock station. After the estate was settled, Elizabeth Weld Bennett, and her husband, the late Edwin C. Bennett, presented our association this grand old carriage. It was used in the 4th of July parade in North Middleboro with Rev. Ray Cosseboom driving two small children representing General and Mrs. Tom Thumb for the Association. As we at that time had only one room at our Public Library, the task of storing it was quite impossible. The problem was solved through the courtesy, kindness, and interest of Mrs. Peter Oliver, and the late Mr. Peter Oliver, who generously offered to let us store it in the great barn on the Doctor Peter Oliver estate (built by Judge Oliver for his son ca. 1769) still preserved by the Peter Olivers. In spite of the gift of the town fathers of an acre on Jackson street when our museum was really born, we have never had room to properly preserve the old Rockaway. Next Spring we hope to present this nineteenth century American carriage to the public in the **NEW** OLD Pierce Carriage Shed. We also hope at this time to present to you a blacksmith shop (moved from the old kitchen and cellar of our No. 1 House) in all its glory. From the smallest and largest anvils and ten foot bellows, the carriage hardware to be mended, forges of various dates, house hardware and oddments, a myriad of house and farm utensils and tools etc. even to a whaling harpoon, we hope this new exhibit will be the most complete in all New England. The third doorway will house a collection of what is hard to describe — let's say "American devices and inventions for saving labor" during the 19th century — from a corn sheller to a whiffenpoof. (Don't please look this up in the dictionary — it isn't there. A whiffenpoof was one of the many, many ways of shelling peas, grinding coffee, splitting straw or any of a dozen ways of doing things that took longer to do than the old method. I invented it just now. If you are from Yale University, forgive me.) Upstairs, we have partitions for a dozen more exhibits (or will have **IF** some of you will pitch in and help in the financing of the interior work still waiting for funds???) that will give us an opportunity of really working on our storerooms in the attic of our second house on Lincoln street. (I see that I have repeated myself in Acquisitions, Donations and Gifts. Forgive me, but this old Rockaway **IS** worth repeating. Can you scrape up a few bucks to help do the job?)—

In our November 1965 issue, Volume VII, #4, there is a fine photograph of the old Judge Wilkes Wood Law Office, built about 1795, and comparable to the very few law offices of this period preserved throughout New England. This building has been presented to us by Mr. and Mrs. J. Vincent Sullivan. It will be moved to the museum property in November, and proudly set up and restored.

ACQUISITIONS, DONATIONS AND GIFTS

This division of our museum's activities is growing to proportions requiring a Sturbridge Village staff. We are doing our best to keep apace, and if you don't find a grateful mention and recognition in this issue, please be patient — just maybe we haven't had time to catalogue and exhibit contributions.

Going back to the last issue, I find that Dr. and Mrs. James M. Bonnar gave us some fine old coin silver spoons that belonged to Mrs. Ethan Peirce of Lakeville. We have had time at last to check them, label them, and display them in the large case in the library. As follows: — Serving spoon made by Newell Harding, Silversmith-Boston 1822, 4 Teaspoons made by Ebenezer Moulton, Silversmith-Boston 1813, 2 Teaspoons, unmarked and unidentified.

And, before I can catch my breath, Mrs. George Phillips of Lakeville offers for the collections a black costume with an elaborate lace coat.

In the early bedroom opposite the Oliver Room we have hung a towel rack surmounted by a carved deer's head and decorated with needlepoint under glass presented by Mrs. Leonard A. Baker of South Main street.

Mrs. Ernest Pratt and Mrs. Lyman Butler have contributed fine old baskets for our basketmaking exhibit, and just yesterday Mr. Frank Everett Buckman brought in a square one with an oak handle for fruit. Within a day or so, Mrs. Pratt again, this time with a small trunk, a fine old cut-a-way coat, some valentines and more books! **AND** even as I write, Mrs. Norman Belrose telephoned that she is bringing over a monkey fur muff and a beaded jacket as well as a handmade irridescent bead change purse.

We are indebted to Mrs. Perley A. Hollis for a picture of Mr. & Mrs. Tom Thumb, and to Miss Doris L. Edwards for a collection of old books, baby dress and other wearing apparel of the 19th century. Mrs. Lavinia E. Benson presented us with a set of dolls furniture made for her by Edwin Wrightington about 1885. Mr. Wrightington made these pieces out of old cigar box wood! Shades of a lost economy.

From the estate of Jennie Hayden, kindness of the Methodist Church of South Middleboro, courtesy of Everett Buckman, we acquired a fine old stenciled, wooden wheel express wagon for the Children's Room. Mr. Buckman also brought us a small collection, to wit:— an old ca. 1880 tobacco cutter for the Store, two kerosene cans — one of wood with spiggot, — an early pair of hair clippers, and a Dietz "Blizzard" kerosene lantern; also a small wood smoother used by cobblers and harnessmakers. From Lawrence Wilbur, also courtesy of Frank Everett Buckman (don't know what we'd do without a Buckman), a fine old coffee mill for the kitchen, and a small unnamed daguerrotype of a child.

Mrs. Joseph Cannucci brought in some iron fragments — parts of a wagon and other hardware, dug up near Judge Oliver's Iron Works. Mr. and Mrs. Lyman Butler, doing a "Buckman service" for Herbert W. Rounseville of New Milford, N. J., brought in some almanacs, books and ephemera found in the Belle Ashley home. We are grateful to Mrs. Helen Wood Ashley for a fine old pottery buckwheat pitcher marked and made by V. T. Wright & Son, Taunton, Mass. This will be exhibited in our Peirce Store, from which it might easily have been purchased long ago.

Miss Deirdre C. Sullivan presented us with some fine old dolls **in memory of** Olive L. Bryant. Two of them are leather bodied with bisque heads, well dressed—and a third a very small china doll. This will be in our Children's Room, of course. While we are in the Children's Room, I find that Mrs. Lester Leland recently gave us a fine toy stove with all the cooking accessories IN THE ORIGINAL MANUFACTURER'S BOX, WITH LABEL. Also, a fine little decorated child's tea set, complete, a clock and some blacksmith's tools.

Thanks to Miss Shirlie Clark we now own an exceptionally fine portrait of Major Herbert Allen Clark, Co. I, 5th Mass. Infantry:— Born, Middleboro 1859, died, Attleboro 1903. Both canvas and wide gilt ornate frame are in fine state. Miss Clark also gave us a nice old watch box, a camping outfit, a hand pump for both bugs and fire, and a small collection of children's dresses. In case you are not familiar with watch boxes, these small wooden gadgets sat on a bedside table, or hung on the wall beside the bed. The watch hung inside the box facing an opening so that during a wakeful night one could take a look and hope for a nap or two before daylight.

A fine old Rockaway carriage to be exhibited in the **New** Carriage-Shed Building. **SEE** Historical Association and Museum News. It needs two small carriage lamps!! Can you help us out here?) —

We are grateful to Mrs. Earl Raymond (Dorothy Bradford) for another small collection of well catalogued heirlooms. A physician's lance once used by Mrs. Raymond's great, great grandfather, Dr. Calvin Bradford of Plympton; two pair of old spectacles one of which belonged to her grandfather, and the other to her great grandmother; a tuning fork used by Jeremiah Sherman of Plympton; an old wrought iron meat hook; a coin silver teaspoon made by Henry Goodwin, Silversmith of Boston in 1833. (This belonged to Deacon Cephas Bumpus of Plympton.); a toy ICE CREAM set, platter and 6 dishes in glass with a design showing a plate of ice cream with lettered borders; a dolls flatiron and frying pan, and last but not least a small bisque doll that belonged to Mrs. Raymond when a child. NO, wait — also a piece of hand embroidered fabric made by Eunice Sherman of Plympton in 1845. (These are the collections that make me wonder how many things I have missed!)

A pamphlet, gift of Miss Ruth Wood, I must read — the title is intriguing: "The Dream, or True History of Deacon Gile's Distillery and Deacon Jone's Brewery. 1859." Miss Wood did not stop here however, she also brought us a fine old paisley vest, a picture of the Old Sproat Tavern*, "Music to be Performed at the World's Peace Jubilee. Boston, June 1872," a hand embroidered chemise. She also gave us FOR MISS MARY WELLS of Deerfield, Mass., two photographs, framed, showing the Bourne house that stood on the corner lot at South Main and Court End Ave. in 1769 — and the Fred N. Whitman house built on the lot in 1899.

Thanks to Miss Elsie McCarthy we have several white aprons worn about 1900, some white underclothes of the same period, and a black silk coat. Mrs. Ernest Pratt and Miss Louise Pratt expanded our collections: Louise Pratt several shirt waists of about 1900, and a 1904 blotter printed for the Peirce Store; Mrs. Pratt several scrap books of color illustrated trade cards and pictures given to her as a child. The Children's Room proudly displays a small iron dolls kettle, a dolls bureau, washboard and clock thanks to Mrs. Warren Pike; also an unknown daguerreotype. Mrs. Harris B. Tripp gave us a Middleboro Directory for 1901 for the library, and Mr. Herbert B. Haley (courtesy of Lyman Butler for delivery) a fine old corn sheller.

We are indebted to Mrs. Ernest Maynard for her Mother's wedding dress, worn in 1899 when she was to become the bride of Lorenzo Wood. The dress was made by Mrs. Wood's Cousin Harriet S. LeBaron. Also for a fine leather bodied, bisque headed, well dressed doll, now sitting in the old cradle in one of our front parlors, not to mention a neat little perfume chatelaine bottle and a brass "hemmer." Thanks to Mrs. Madeleine Edmunds of Northampton, Mass. the museum library now boasts a copy of Shirley Sargent's "Pioneers and Petticoats": Yosemite's Early Women 1865-1900. There is a fine account of Cephas Thompson's Daughter Florantha's marriage to Granville Temple Sproat, and her experiences while living in Yosemite Valley in the 1860 period.

From Mrs. Clinton B. Gates we gratefully acknowledge the gift of a set of CRANDALL'S BUILDING BLOCKS — THE BLOCK CIRCUS in the original box. This is an ingenious toy in the form of acrobats whose feet fit into slots in the box, and stand erect ready for action. It was given to Clinton B. Gates by Morrill S. Ryder about seventy years ago. Our thanks to Mrs. Julia Long (courtesy of Bud Anders Martenson, 3rd) for a very unusual fan in the original fan shaped box. Ernest Crowell presented the Carpenter's Shop with the largest bench plane we have. Mrs. Nina L. Thomas, now of Westboro, Mass., brought us a fine old glass kerosene lamp, patented in 1870, she is sure she purchased at the Peirce Store years ago; SO, thanks to her it is now right back in the store again! Gracious, I almost forgot the fancy comb given by Mrs. Long, also delivered by Bud Martenson.

Our thanks again to Mr. & Mrs. Austen L. Beals for a very fine painting of the Nemasket River down by Oliver's Iron Works. In fine condition in its gilt frame, we attribute it to Mary Sproat thanks to Mr. Beal's memory — and also because we have another painting, seemingly by the same artist, of another view of the Nemasket, in an identical frame of the same period. Also a fine photograph of Joseph E. Beals, his grandfather, who in his day contributed a great deal to the history and progress of the town. Also a composite of four Middleboro scenes on Centre street and South Main, framed. The painting hangs over the mantel in our costume room.

Mrs. Rene Robillard of South Carver, thanks to another Buckman delivery, presented a hand crocheted lace and satin antimacassar, and a knitted dress trimming. She made them both herself. We are also proud to display, thanks to Harold J. Donner, Exec. Vice President of the Co-operative Bank, a small wood carved change box used in the bank up to 1915. It was made by the late Walter L. Beals, former Treasurer whose hobby was wood carving and woodwork. You may see this relic of American banking during this part of this century in the cupboard in the front parlor. Visiting the bank now, as well as other modern institutions, it doesn't seem possible that THIS was the change box or till just a little while ago. We are also indebted to Mrs. J. Walter Reimels for two fine old fans for our collection in the costume room — one is of ostrich feathers and the other a colorful Spanish scene — Beauties.

And now to the Tom Thumb collections, thanks to Mrs. Lyman Butler who has given us a wonderful little miniature spoon, gold plated, in the original box, and a large silver plated cake dish. These both came from the Tom Thumb Home, and are displayed with pardonable pride.

And again, last but not least (unless someone else telephones or drops in before I finish and get this to Thatcher's Printing), a fine old gilt tooled Pulpit Bible from Miss Rose Briggs of Plymouth. It was printed in Brattleborough, Vermont, in 1816, with fine engraved plates and folding color outline maps. It was used by Elder Ebenezer Briggs in Middleborough for fifty years, later preserved by Mrs. Elisha Tucker and then given to Mrs. Mary B. Thomas of Cleveland, Ohio. This fine old Bible may be seen on the table in our museum library, where we also have the Cephas Thompson portraits of Major Elisha Tucker and his Wife who preserved it for many years. A venerable bit of American history back home again — thanks to our friend Miss Briggs.

P.S. I somehow knew I'd never get away with this closing up of this department so soon! From the Albert Soule's ancient barn, due to their generous and thoughtful loyalty to the museum we have just acquired a fine old stone boat, a wooden snow plow made by Albert's Father, a "piano buggy box and seat," and several old wood barrels WITH a lot of extra hoops ready to make more barrels. I doubt if we make any more, but they may come in jim dandy-handy to mend others!

AND, OHMYGOSHNESS MISS AGNES, here I've forgotten all about the Harold A. Halls. I thought it was all in the June issue, but of course, in the rush of the Middleborough Agricultural Fair at Raynham, the week's Country Store exhibit and the auction, it didn't make the press. Well, to make a long story short and to the point, the Halls very generously GAVE US PRACTICALLY A WHOLE FURNISHED HOUSE! We moved it to the fair grounds, picked out what we needed and wanted at the museum, and added about four hundred dollars to our bank account from the auction of the rest!! THAT doesn't happen to historical museums very often, I can tell you.

The museum now boasts, thanks to our former President and his hard working Wife, a fine early 18th century loom, all complete and ready to set up, several early chairs, several bedside and small tables of the 19th century, as well as other smaller pieces now gracing our bedrooms and other exhibits.

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Considering that word DONATIONS, let me close with most sincere thanks again to all of you who so generously contributed to the building fund for our new memorial to the Old Peirce Store carriage shed. It is almost completed weatherwise, and before we go to press I hope I may be able to get Clint Clark to take a picture of progress; if so, an old photo of the Peirce Store showing the original carriage shed will be on the same page! If not, be sure to get the February issue, Volume 9

FLASH!!

The Judge Wood Law Office **has been moved**, and will tomorrow take its place in our growing village (October 27th, 1966). We are pleased and proud to announce that Joseph E. Fernandes, President and Treasurer of Fernandes Super Markets, Inc., has very generously underwritten the entire cost. This is great news for us, but—and I have been criticised before—DON'T FORGET, that a foundation must be built, and that the ancient building will need repairs to restore it for future years. **I STILL HOPE** our members and friends will chip in (just deduct it from your income tax) to take care of these coming expenses AS WELL AS the moving of the Horace Atkins House. PLEASE?

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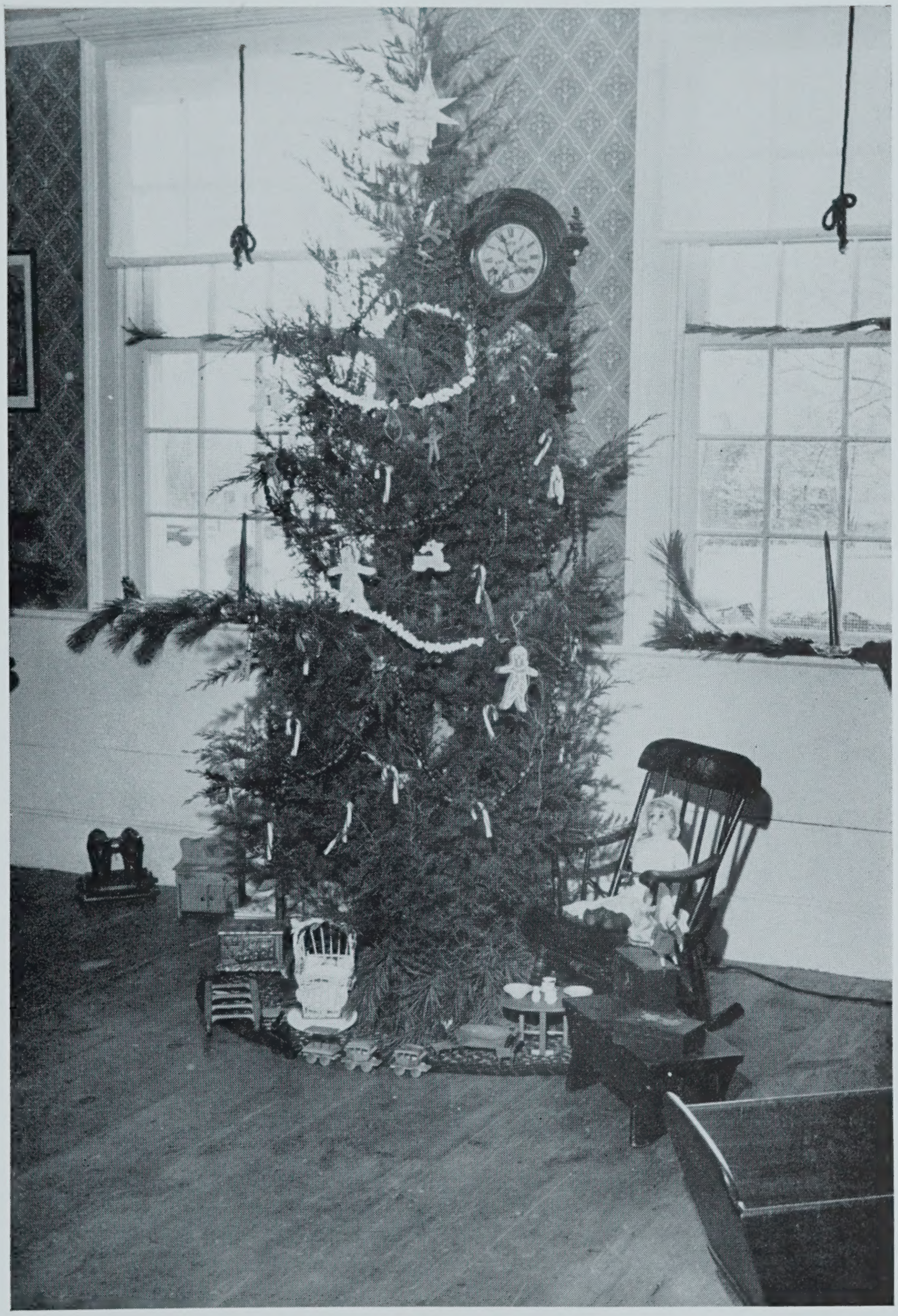

ONE OF THE MUSEUM'S FRONT PARLORS DECORATED BY THE GARDEN CLUB FOR THEIR CHRISTMAS TOUR OF OLD HOMES IN DECEMBER 1964. (Photograph by Clinton Clark)

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